
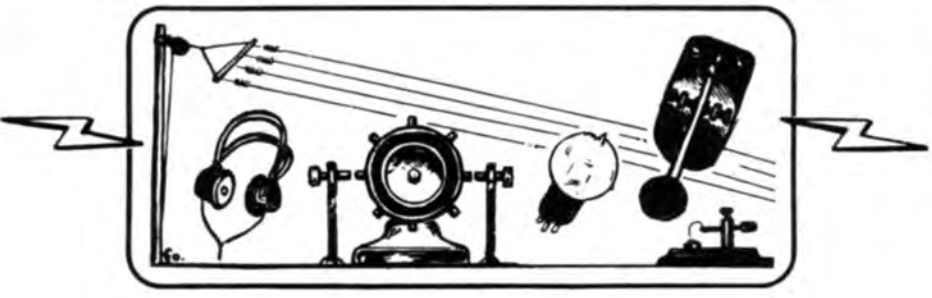



ST. JOHNS, N.F.L.D. DEC 12 1901 POLDHU

SPARKS JOURNAL

★ ★ ★ ★ SOCIETY OF WIRELESS PIONEERS, INC ★ ★ ★ ★

RECORDING THE EARLY HISTORY & DEVELOPMENT OF THE WIRELESS

VOLUME 5, NO. 2

- QUARTERLY -

WIRELESS HALL OF FAME EDITION



Thales of Miletus
PATRIARCH OF ELECTRICIANS

BORN: 640 B.C.
Crece

DIED: 548 B.C.
Crece

Wireless Hall of Fame



Genesis of Wireless Communications

The ideas, theories and experiments of these men, world scholars of earlier centuries, have been consolidated and crystalized into a new mode of communications which Marconi did not personally invent but was able to perfect so mankind could use. Theirs is the legacy of the "Wireless" and ours is the "Heritage" of these great men who collectively did so much to enrich our lives. (Read Pages 31-34).



William Thomson (Lord Kelvin)
NATURAL PHILOSOPHER AND INVENTOR

BORN: June 26, 1824
Belfast, Ireland

DIED: December 17, 1907
Largs, Scotland



Heinrich Rudolph Hertz
DISCOVERER OF ELECTRIC WAVES

BORN: February 22, 1857
Hamburg, Germany

DIED: January 1, 1894
Bonn, Germany



William Crookes
INVENTED THE CATHODE-RAY TUBE

BORN: June 17, 1832
London, England

DIED: April 11, 1919
London, England



Alessandro Volta
INVENTED THE ELECTRIC BATTERY

BORN: February 18, 1745
Como, Italy

DIED: March 5, 1827
Como, Italy



John Ambrose Fleming
A DETECTOR WON HIM KNIGHTHOOD

BORN: November 29, 1849
Lancaster, England



Luigi Galvani
DISCOVERED ELECTRICITY FLOWS

BORN: September 9, 1737
Bologna, Italy

DIED: December 9, 1798
Bologna, Italy



William Gilbert
SUPREME EXPERIMENTER OF HIS DAY

BORN: May 24, 1544
Colchester, England

DIED: November 30, 1603
Colchester, England



Benjamin Franklin
FOUND THE KEY TO STATIC

BORN: January 17, 1706
Boston, Mass.

DIED: April 17, 1790
Philadelphia, Pa.



Joseph Henry
AMERICA'S FARADAY

BORN: December 17, 1797
Albany, N. Y.

DIED: May 13, 1878
Washington, D. C.



Reginald Aubrey Fessenden
AMERICAN PIONEER IN WIRELESS

BORN: October 6, 1866
East Bolton, Quebec

DIED: July 23, 1932
Bermuda



Adolph K. H. Slaby
FUNKENTELEGRAPHIE OCCUPIED HIS MIND

BORN: April 18, 1849
Berlin, Germany

DIED: April 6, 1913
Chapfentzen, Germany



- Scientific & Historical Society of Professionals -





SPARKS JOURNAL USPS 365-050

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++++EDITION++++

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Next Edition

The RADIO AVIATION EDITION will be the next issue of SPARKS JOURNAL which we hope to bring to you in March 1983. We have a substantial amount of early day history of the Air Mail, Exploration flights of Clipper and other aircraft. We do welcome material whether it be the experiences of members or a story about "how" radio has been used and is of service to aviation and flying. We would like to do articles on Service Organizations that have served the aviation business. Should you have early clippings, pictures, illustrations or material of any kind you think others would like to see or read, send it along. The more input we have, the better we can serve you. Thanks for your cooperation. WAB.

"WORD GAME" by Ann Shermer
from New York City Power Squadron's CROW'S NEST

You never go downstairs, always below,
The bag you unpack is the gear you will stow,
The porthole's a window, the bunk is a bed,
The john on a ship is the thing called a head...
There's portside and starb'd, the beam and the draft,
The bow is up forward, the back is the aft;
The wall is a bulkhead, the deck is a floor,
There are terms anatomical found by the score:
Eyes, joints, and elbows, ribs, arms and knees,
A hank and a forefoot, buttock and trees,
A head (which we mentioned), a waist and a throat -
It's hard to believe they're all part of a boat.



Lifted from WHISTLING BUOY 12th Dist.



THE WIRELESS PIONEERS



The Founders Page

*A
Sure Way
to a
Happy Day*

Happiness is something
we create in our mind,
It's not something you search for
and so seldom find--
It's just waking up
and beginning the day
By counting our blessings
and kneeling to pray--
It's giving up thoughts
that breed discontent
And accepting what comes
as a "gift, heaven-sent"--
It's giving up wishing
for things we have not
And making the best of
whatever we've got--
It's knowing that life
is determined for us,
And pursuing our tasks
without fret, fume or fuss--
For it's by completing
what God gives us to do
That we find read contentment
and happiness, too.



William A. Breniman



The crew aboard a ship at sea
Was having fire drill;
The bell was clanging -- one, two, three --
The whistle blasts were shrill.

They say that "Sparks" was in his shack
All through this "fake" distress --
Excitement proved too much for him;
HE SENT AN "SOS"!

-- "FO" (586-P)

CDR. Joseph J. Sarno - 3078-P

The name of this edition of SPARKS JOURNAL has been changed from "Potpourri of History" to "Wireless Hall of Fame" due to the amount of material we thought would be of great interest to our members. We think the Potpourri and Serendipity flavor can still be found in the large serving of Fred Rosebury's edited fare which I am sure all will enjoy.

I would like to mention that we have plans to include all of the pictures of those listed in our Hall of Fame Honor Roll - plus many more, in the Wireless Almanac when we find time to publish. We will also include a brief biography of each individual listed in addition to their pictures.

PILOT HOUSE REPORT: We have growing concern about not being able to answer or acknowledge the growing volume of mail in an expeditious manner. We will shortly try to take a major step in resolving the problem by changes in HQ. office arrangements. We will appreciate your patience and forbearance. An assist would be the forwarding of 1983 dues (\$10.00) by those who have not already paid as this will save need to send a statement in the immediate future.

From members around the world, we have received many cards and messages with "Seasons Greetings". I would like to say "Thanks" to each and every one who remembered us. Such messages are indeed appreciated.

May you have a "Happy and Healthy 1983"! 73 - Bill B.

BERYL PFIZER SAID..."I write down everything I want to remember. That way, instead of spending a lot of time trying to remember what it was I wrote down, I spend the time looking for the paper I wrote it down on."

SMILE

- A Smile costs nothing but creates much.
- A Smile enriches those who receive it without impoverishing those who give it.
- A Smile is blessed to the weary, comfort to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad. It is nature's best antidote for trouble.
- A Smile cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen for it is no earthly good to anyone unless it is given.
- IF, in the hurry of life, you meet someone who is too weary to give you a smile, give him one of yours, for there is no one who needs it so much as the one who has none to give.

Weighed from THE HELM, DIV VI



- I AM A KEY PERSON -

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll xxcpt for onx of thx kxys. I havx wishxd many timxs that it workxd pxrfectly.

It is trux that thxrx arx forty-onx kxys that work wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs all thx diffxrxncx. Somxtimxs it sxrms to mx that an organization such as thx Society of Wirxlxss Pionxrs is somxwhat likx my typxwritxr -- not all thx mxmbxrs arx working propxrlly. You may say to yoursxlf, "Wxll, I'm only onx pxrson, I won't makx or brxak a program." But it doxs makx a diffxrxncx, bxcause any program, to bx xffxctivx, nxxds thx activx participation of xvxy mxmbxr. So thx nxxt timx you think you arx only onx pxrson and that your xfforts arx not nxxdxd, rxmxmbxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf: "I'm a kxy pxrson in our organization and I am nxxdxd vxry much!"

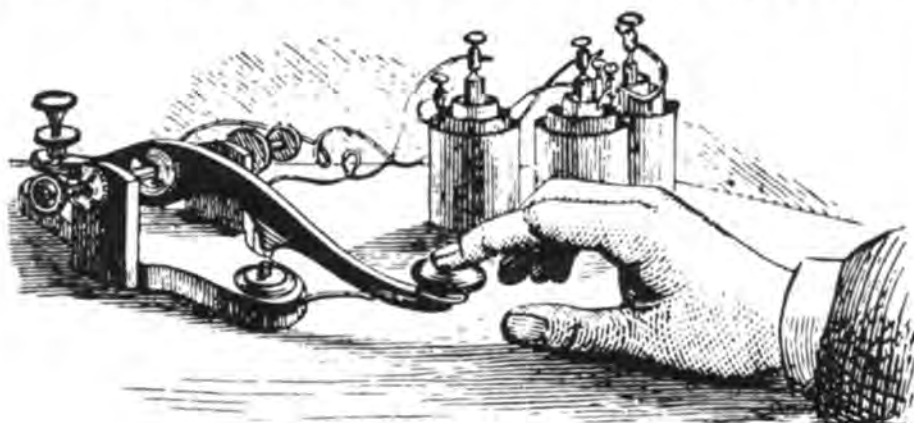


Witness to History



Recording the Early History & Development of the Wireless

Edison--The Telegrapher



By - Al D'Onofrio

"What's electricity?" asked the young boy, his blue eyes searching the face of the station agent at Port Huron.

The man, a Scotsman, paused for a moment in puzzlement: "I don't rightly know, Al," as Thomas Alva Edison was called, knowing full well that that kind of answer wouldn't hold -- least, not for this boy. Then his face broke into a broad smile: "Electricity. It's like a long dog with its tail in Scotland and its head in London. When you pull its tail in Edingurgh, it barks in London." They broke into laughter at the comic imagery, and the description remained as one of Edison's favorites.

Young Edison, having a natural desire to learn all he could about life's secrets, especially about this wondrous phenomenon called electricity, read all he could on the subject. In a popular book on experiments in physical science, he came across an article on how to construct a telegraph station.

He built the station, taught himself the Morse code, and with a friend nearby, was happily stringing wires through the trees to connect the two houses. The telegraphic bug had bitten Edison, as it had so many other young, inquisitive minds of his day. Telegraphy was new, mysterious, exciting.

Being resourceful, he used wire that was used for suspending stovepipes, and for insulators, small glass bottles pegged on nails hammered into the trees. Although the telegraph setup was crude, Edison himself was later to remark in reminiscence: "It worked just fine."

It wasn't long after when young Edison, now working with the railroad selling newspapers and small items to the passengers, began to realize the commercial importance of telegraphy.

With the country being torn apart by the Civil War and with everyone hungry for any solid news about how it was progressing, Edison worked out a clever business deal with the station agents along his "butcher boy" route.

Enlisting the aid of the "first" telegrapher station agent, Edison would supply snippets of headline stories to the station agents down the line -- news that had not as yet reached anyone at these stations. The "second" telegrapher, in turn, would post these news bulletins in a prominent spot for all those waiting for the train to see. When Edison arrived with his newspapers at these stations, he found an eager clientele willing to pay five times the regular price for a paper.

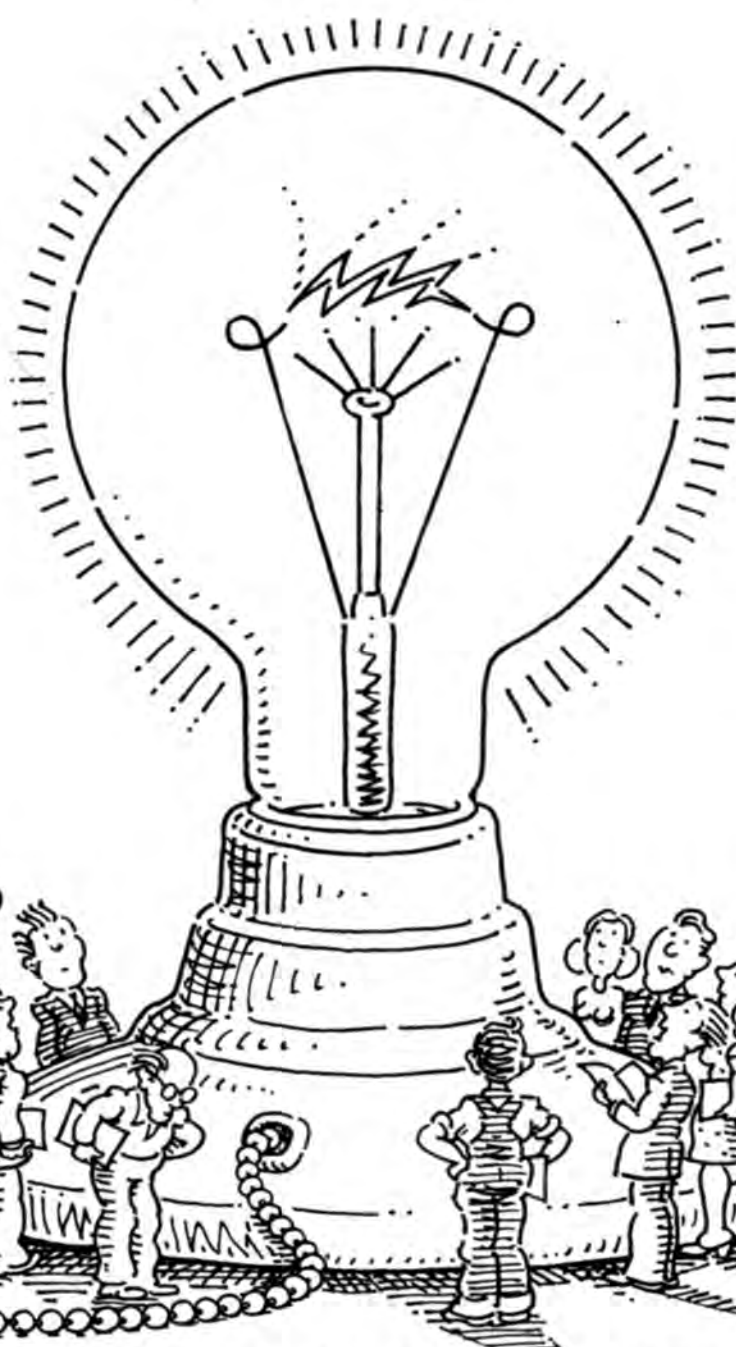
"It was then," said Edison, in reflection, "that it struck me -- telegraphy was just about the best thing going. I was determined to become a telegrapher."

As fate would have it, Edison, who was about 15, was dreamily watching the switching of boxcars at Mount Clemens. Suddenly, there, right before him, he caught sight of the station master's three-year old son in the middle of the tracks, with a rolling boxcar thundering down upon him. Seconds counted. He scamp-ered toward the boy and snatched him up, both tumbling over the tracks to safety, as the boxcar passed by. Although Edison maintained that the rescue was easy and posed no real danger, the station master, clutching his son to his breast, thought otherwise.

As a token of his gratitude to young Edison, the station master, a Mr. J. U. Mackensie, offered to teach him to become a train telegrapher, a good career opportunity that Edison readily accepted.

In a few days, he showed up for his first lesson in becoming a train telegrapher, toting alongside his own telegraph key and other gear, which he himself had turned out at the local gun-smith's shop.

(Continued on Page 36)



Thomas A. Edison

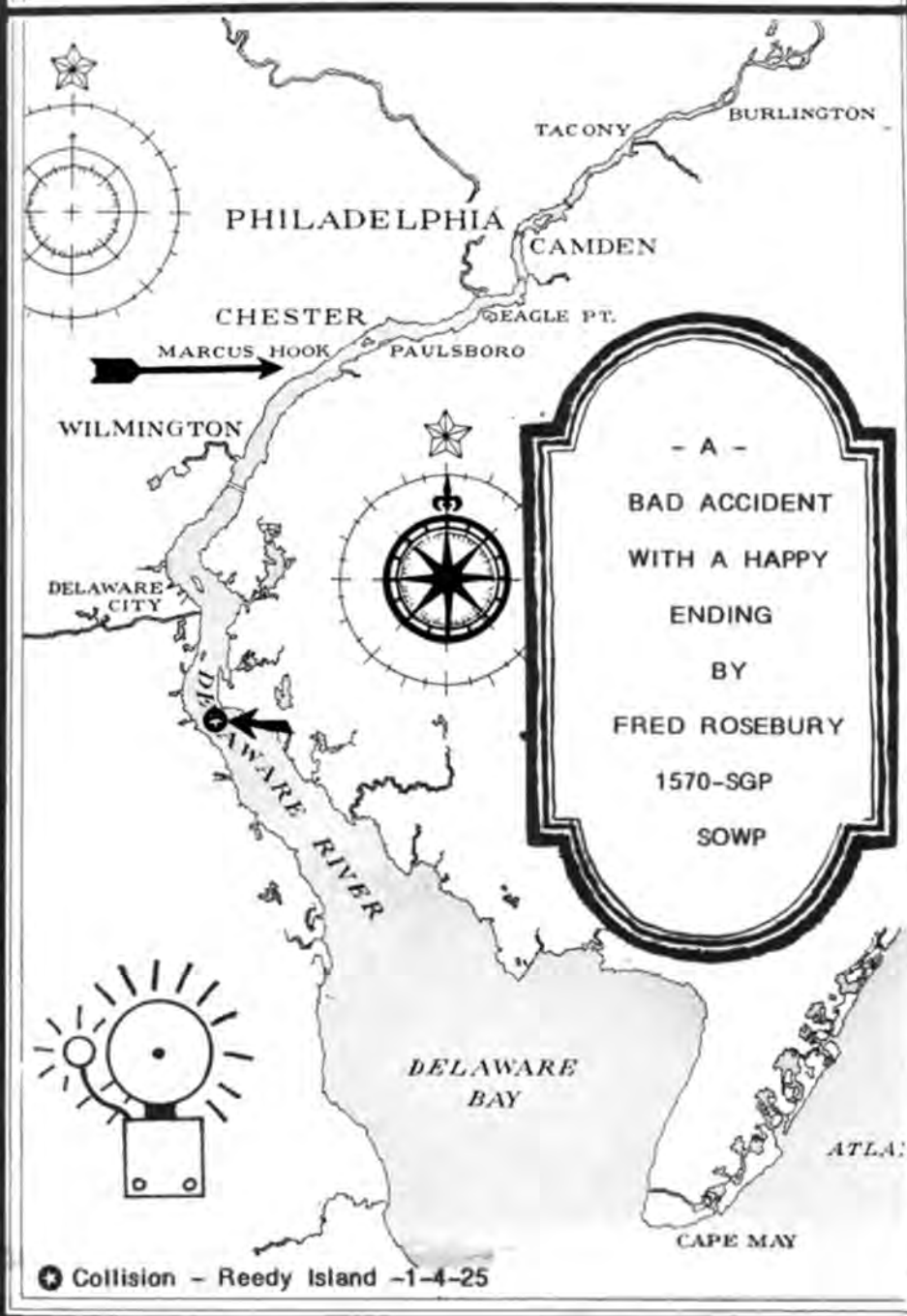
EDISON: THE MAN BEHIND THE GENIUS

Thomas Alva Edison, the creator of the phonograph, the incandescent light, the motion-picture camera, the mimeograph, the carbon transmitter (which made the telephone commercially practicable) and more than 1000 other patented inventions, was probably loved and admired as much as any other American of his time. Many still recall the night after his funeral, when, at 9:59 EST (it was October 21, 1931), millions of American households turned off, for a minute of tribute, the lights he had invented.



Thomas Edison's
incandescent lamp

A Near Tragedy on the Delaware



Fog problems on the Delaware

The SS Manatawny (KDPM) was originally built as a dry cargo carrier at Hog Island, Pa. during WWI. When the war was over and there was a much bigger demand for oil tankers than for freighters, the USSB, owners of the vessel, put out requests for bids to have the Manatawny and maybe several sister ships converted into tankers. The Baltimore Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. at Curtis Bay near Baltimore won the contract for the Manatawny, and the work was done in several months. For whatever reasons, the USSB reneged on the deal and so the BS&D Co. legally seized the ship for nonpayment and decided to operate it themselves, creating a company called the "Steamship Manatawny, Inc."

I joined the Manatawny as sole radioman on June 21, 1924 and made 25 voyages in her between that date and November, 1925. Nineteen of the voyages were between Marcus Hook, Pa. and Aransas Pass, Tex. on a charter with the Sun Oil Co. Some of the other oil voyages between various Gulf ports and Baltimore, Tiverton, R.I., and New York, were with Sinclair Oil Co. The last two voyages I made in the Manatawny were interesting ones in which she carried molasses from several places in the West Indies to New Orleans and New York.

On one of the Aransas Pass-Marcus Hook trips, the Manatawny was in a collision in the Delaware River. We had left Aransas Pass on December 27, 1924, with about 50,000 barrels of high-grade Texas crude, arriving off Cape May, N.J. early in the morning of January 4, 1925, where a pilot came aboard. The weather was cold and foggy. After a slow trip up the Delaware River in thickening fog, it was decided, about 9 a.m. to anchor as the visibility was almost zero. The ship got under way again when the fog lifted a bit about 4 p.m. There was some shipping moving on the river. As the Manatawny was rounding the bend near Reedy Island we saw coming down river a large British cargo vessel, the SS Nevisian, which was apparently in ballast or without cargo and rather high in the water. The Manatawny gave the signal to pass on the port side and our pilot gave the order to steer to starboard, which is what the Nevisian did also. But although the Manatawny's helm was hard over to starboard the rudder did not respond!

The Manatawny kept shearing acutely to port. Realizing that something had gone wrong with our steering gear, the pilot grabbed the whistle cord and frantically pulled the danger signal several times, but it was too late.

We collided with a sickening jar. The Nevisian had just started to cross our bows when the impact took place. We could see the heavy steel plates of the British ship flying apart as though they were tissue paper.

The Nevisian was moving at a moderate speed when we struck her, at which moment our engines were already going full astern, but the Manatawny's headway was too great to be checked in such a short space. The pilot of the Nevisian had the presence of mind to continue going after the Manatawny backed out, which occurred in a matter of seconds. The Nevisian had a hole in her as big as a house and was no doubt leaking badly because the Manatawny was deep loaded. Our ship had not been very badly damaged. There was some ice in the river, not as much as in that famous painting of George Washington crossing it (and unwisely standing up in the boat), but the water looked uncomfortably cold.

Our Captain S.F. Millikan ordered all hands to don their life jackets. There was an exchange of radio messages between the two ships and a notification to Brooklyn Navy Yard (NAH). It seems that just about the same time the tanker William Rockefeller had gone aground off the Florida coast and so much SOS traffic was cluttering up the air that our accident seemed minor and got a bit lost in the shuffle; the Navy operator at NAH must have been somewhat confused.

The pilot of the Nevisian beached her on a sandspit; she seemed to be in no immediate danger of sinking. In our exchange of messages the British ship reported they were "badly holed forward, no one injured," and I told them, with advice from our skipper that we had some damage in the forepeak, etc. but no injuries to personnel. Brooklyn Navy Yard halted all radio communication for more than an hour, although neither I nor the Nevisian radioman had sent out an SOS as such. I gave NAH a brief account of the collision, dictated by Capt. Millikan, and said that neither ship appeared to be in danger and no one was hurt.

I did all this with an antenna that had partly come down about our ears. At the impact, our foremast was buckled forward because of the pull of the forestay cable, and the four-wire antenna got stretched a little too much. I had quickly noted that one wire was still holding clear; I went out and cut the other three before using the transmitter (Navy type, 2 kw. quenched-gap SE1205A). That one-wire antenna was quite adequate to do what I had to do.

The slight settling of the Manatawny by the head was hardly noticeable. It was found on inspection that our forepeak was filled with river water (not drinkable, even in those days) but the collision bulkhead was watertight and holding. When it was determined that the Nevisian was in no immediate danger, the Manatawny got under way again.

Our engineers discovered that a small pin, worth maybe less than fifty cents, had either fallen out or got sheared off in some vital part of the steering engine; they were able to make a quick repair.

We had to anchor again a little further up river because the fog closed in worse than before. A little after midnight Captain Millikan told me to turn in; I would be called if necessary. On going below for a bit of night lunch before I hit the sack I made note of the fact that a devil-may-care poker game was in progress in the saloon: one would never suspect that an accident, which could certainly have been serious if it had happened in deep water, had occurred only a few hours before.

We anchored off the oil terminal at Marcus Hook early the next morning to await a discharge berth. There was no further incident. About 9 a.m. the Nevisian passed slowly upriver toward the Sun shipyards near Philadelphia. She was assisted by four tugs and was far down in the water but keeping afloat with some sort of pontoons. The rent in her side was not visible as it was on the side away from us, but she looked crippled, with her bows almost down to the waterline and a heavy list to starboard. Captain Millikan blew a signal and she answered in a cheerful enough fashion. All in the day's work!

The strange and unexplained result of the collision was that the Manatawny's fo'c'stle deck was found to be littered with chicken feathers and other curious trash as though we had scooped a rubbish heap out of the Nevisian's innards.

EMERGENCY AT COAST GUARD



BY

FREDERIC H. STEPHENS

CDQ DYING WIFE OF CHIEF OPERATOR AT U.S.C.G. RADIO COMPASS STATION ILLIANSKI STRAITS, ALASKA - JANUARY 1923

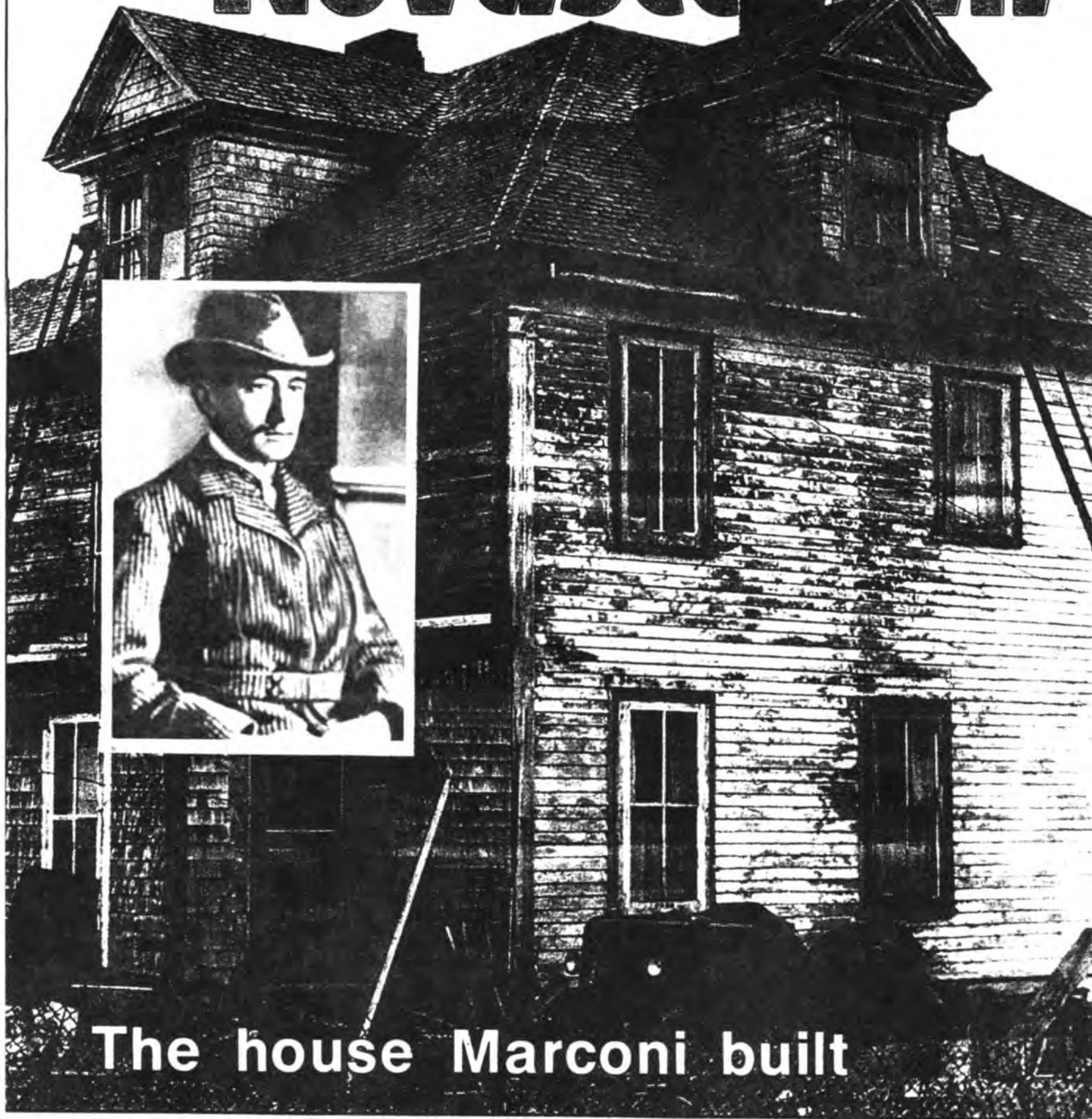
After completing the salmon canning season as Chief Operator of Libby McNeil, high powered 15 Kilowatt, rotary spark installation KMT, at Libbyville, Alaska, I found my third job, with Miss Cao's help, as Radio Operator/Time Keeper with the Chichagoff Gold Mining Company on a remote coastal island at Chichagoff, Alaska (roughly 80 miles north of Sitka and 90 miles west of Juneau). The transmitter consisted of a one kilowatt Thordarson transformer and non-sync open rotary. The receiver was rather a mess of junk, but fortunately I had brought one from Northwestern Radio Manufacturing Co. (where I worked before going out as a commercial operator) very high quality maple ball variometer tuners followed by VT-1 regenerative detector and two stages of VT-1 amplifier. After making some improvements such as two additional stationary lugs on the rotary gap, and installing a new antenna, I was able to work U.S. Navy at Sitka and Juneau at any time. The Coast Guard DF stations also began asking me to relay for them when they couldn't get through.

The Illianski DF station was situated on an even more remote island than was Chichagoff. Possibly because of this I made frequent contacts with him. On a cold and stormy night in January 1923, I turned on my receiver and I heard him frantically calling CQ, CQ, CQD, CQD. I immediately replied and he told me that his wife who was living on the station with him had had a miscarriage. They couldn't stop the bleeding and she was sure to die unless a doctor could get to her soon. I immediately contacted the Mining Company Doctor and the company Manager. The sea was rough and it was getting dark. They only had the 35 foot launch because the 110 foot diesel ship had not returned from its trip to Juneau. The doctor gave me some instructions to relay to the Chief of the DF station and added that they expected to be there in less than two hours. Meantime, the Chief Operator and I maintained constant contact. His wife had lost consciousness and he was a truly worried man. Finally he said, "The doctor has arrived. The situation is most serious, but he hopes that he can save her."

I suddenly felt very tired and dozed fitfully, with headphones on, until daybreak. He called just at sunup to say his wife had recovered and he had full instructions from the doctor for her continued care, and to call the doctor daily with details concerning her condition. Wireless is surely the wand of the gods!

Saturday, September 18, 1982

The **Novascotian**



The house Marconi built

The **Novascotian**

Volume 1 Number 36

Cover Story
The house Marconi built

A majestic old place stands, forgotten and in need of paint, in the middle of the bush in the Glace Bay area. It was built in 1903 by Guglielmo Marchese Marconi, the Italian-born inventor. After visiting the house, P.T. Cusack writes it deserves a place in Canadian history but it has been forgotten by all except its current owner and Italians. Cover photo by Cusack.



Years ago, before the Japanese perfected the transistor and companies with names such as Sanyo and Toshiba and a dozen others flooded the market with affordable portable units, one name seemed to stand apart from the others when shopping for that wonder of wonders — the first radio.

For some the purchase of that early radio was their only connection with Guglielmo Marchese Marconi, the Italian-born inventor whose fame seemed to spread around the world as rapidly as the radio waves with which he experimented.

But, although many were familiar with the name, few ever realized that he lived and worked in our province. Most of us associated the name with Newfoundland and school textbooks rarely ever bothered to correct the misconception.

The old house with 18 rooms still stands on the outskirts of Glace Bay, and, although rickety in appearance, it is still alive with the presence of the great Italian inventor.

Part of the reason can be attributed to the loving care of Russell Cunningham who bought the house in 1945, a few years after the death of Marconi.

Freelance writer P.T. Cusack, in this week's cover story tells the fascinating story of how Marconi came to be in Cape Breton and also relates the efforts by Russell Cunningham to have the old house — still full of Marconi's furniture books and materials used in experiment — made into a museum for the benefit of all Canadians.

No doubt such a museum would prove to be an attraction for tourists in the area. Even in its present condition

Editorial Comment

visitors from as far away as Italy have made what have been described as pilgrimages to the old house just to see where their countryman did much of the work that made him a household word around the world.

Whether money could be found for such a venture in a period of restraint remains to be seen. It may be time for non-government funded groups to step in and take on the some of the tasks that have traditionally been done totally with money from taxpayers.

A private group would have to offer some guarantees that its intentions regarding restoration and future care of the house were honorable. Such a project might not prove too expensive when weighted against the benefits.

In an era when man is charting new frontiers, when the exchange of information is playing an increasingly important role in our lives, perhaps it is time we paused to remember the man from our province who helped smooth the way for modern communications. ■

— Roger Edge

The house Marconi built

By P.T. Cusack

A majestic old place stands, ghostlike, in the middle of the bush in the Glace Bay area on the shores of the Atlantic. Built in 1903 by the Italian-born inventor, Guglielmo Marchese Marconi, it is the kind of place that chapters should be written about in Canadian history books and teachers should tell stories about. Instead, it sits forgotten and in need of paint, worshipped by Russell Cunningham, its present-day owner, and by Italians — dignitaries and family members of Marconi — but forgotten by Canada and Canadians.

Cunningham, who was born around the time the house was built, devoted most of his working life to the Sydney and Louisburg (S and L) Railway but, when he was young, he worked around the Marconi house. It must have been an impressive place in those days, especially because of its location in the middle of nowhere. Although few houses had electricity at that time, Marconi and his assistant, R.N. Vivian, wired their new Cape Breton residence with wiring that still exists today.

Cunningham, who was born around the time the house was built, devoted most of his working life to the Sydney and Louisburg (S and L) Railway but, when he was young, he worked around the Marconi house. It must have been an impressive place in those days, especially because of its location in the middle of nowhere. Although few houses had electricity at that time, Marconi and his assistant, R.N. Vivian, wired their new Cape Breton residence with wiring that still exists today.

Cunningham says the place was not well-suited for the harsh Canadian environment. The 18-room residence has 37 doors and 47 windows — "He thought he was still in Italy" — and there are 18 large radiators and four fireplaces — "They were keen on fireplaces."

Marconi called this house "the residence" and, just up the Sand Lake Road, he built a staff house much like the first to accommodate the 12 engineers who worked for him. There were close to 60 people employed at the site and three or four smaller bungalows were also constructed, in addition to a wireless station about 30 metres from the main house.



Russell Cunningham surrounded by history

Wireless History

Today, part of the wireless station and the main residence remain standing, as much a tribute to the long-haired old gentleman who preserves them as to the great inventor who chose to build them here. After Marconi died in 1937, many of his employees remained at the location until 1945 when Russell Cunningham bought the place. Now almost 80, he is, whether he admits it or not, likely the world's foremost expert on Marconi. He lives surrounded by the inventor's possessions — his old roll-top desk, hardwood furniture, typewriters, and boxes full of materials used in early experiments.

It is, you would think, the kind of place that should be protected and preserved and shared with other Canadians. Sadly, this is not the case. Although the house and its belongings are priceless, there is no insurance and already there has been one fire which fortunately did little damage. The insurance, of course, doesn't really matter because it would be impossible to replace these living pieces of history. But, you know there's a better option than housing everything in an 80-year-old house with 80-year-old wiring and 80-year-old fireplaces and chimneys.

Russell Cunningham knows it too and he has been trying to do something about it. He said he has offered to sell the furnishings to the Canadian government, so they can be preserved for future generations of schoolchildren, and teachers who tell them stories in the springtime.

"I can't preserve it forever. There's too much stuff," Cunningham said.

Regrettably, he says the Canadians do not seem to be interested, although he did say they offered to help keep the place in shape if it was donated to them and if Cunningham stayed on to give tours and talk to visitors.

"I wouldn't get my gardens in and I'd do nothing all day. I'm a farmer, you know."

The depth of lack of interest on the part of Canadian officials is matched only by the keen interest of the Italian government and its people. That country's ambassador to Canada has visited the Marconi home and, as recently as the first week of August, other Italian officials and crew members from their ships paid a visit to the site they seem to worship. And, they have managed to do something Canadian officials seem to be incapable of — find money to buy Marconi's possessions.

"The Italians have \$1 million in the fund already," Cunningham said.

This winter, Marconi's youngest daughter (she's 66) is coming to visit, thus increasing the chances that the house's valuable belongings may end up in Italy.

"This is the only place his family can come now," Cunningham said. "She can sit in his chair, eat her supper at his table in his diningroom, and, when she gets tired, she can go upstairs and sleep in his bed."

Although the Italian visitors are welcomed with open arms, others are not so lucky. Cunningham said he frequently chases reporters who show up at his door. I made it inside for a three-hour visit because of my age ("Well, you're young, so I'll give you a few minutes") and because I came to visit with his granddaughter by my side. It's too bad other writers do not have the same opportunity because Cunningham has so much to share — valuable information which, like the furniture and house, may someday be lost forever if something is not done now.

History books and encyclopedias have little to offer on the 34 years in which the great inventor based his operations in Nova Scotia. Many do not even mention it while others mislead readers into thinking Marconi was in Newfoundland at the time. Actually, he devoted only a couple of years to his wireless experiment there, leaving because there was too much opposition to his work.

(Continued on Page 8)



... 'Since the days of Marconi'

THE Italian Government just did not know what they were missing out on when they showed their disinterest in the apparently wild ideas of the young Marconi.

Transmitting radio messages through space was beyond them and they failed to see the significance and potential of the new embryo science of electronics.

Had it been otherwise Guglielmo Marconi might not have left his native Italy and Chelmsford, where he set up his experimental laboratories in 1896, would not have developed into the vast centre for the electronics industry it is today.

Last Thursday was the centenary of Marconi's birth. It was a day of celebration in Chelmsford, and throughout the radio, TV and electronics industries.

It was Marconi, the son of a wealthy Italian landowner and his Irish wife, daughter of Andrew Jameson, the whisky distiller, who saw the possibilities of radio — until then shackled to laboratories, the plaything of scientists.

Between 1895 to 1897 he succeeded in transmitting signals from a mere few yards to nearly nine miles across the Bristol Channel. And by the end of the century with the potential of radio becoming clear, wireless had been adopted by both the British and Italian navies.

The greatest moment of triumph came in 1901 when he made his first transatlantic transmission across 2,000 miles of open sea. At the time there was some doubt that the three faint bleeps picked up by Marconi's receiver were signals at all, but were merely atmospheric. The Marconi firm are proud to point out that it is a marvel that long-distance electronics developed from three little bleeps, but it is a sheer miracle if there were no bleeps.

Radio was famous for the role it played in the capture of notorious criminal Dr. Crippen. The Marconi factories which had developed in Chelmsford played a vital part in the First World War developing direction-finding techniques.

Another milestone came in 1920 with the first advertised public broadcast by Australian singer Nellie Melba.

But behind all the scientific success was the driving force and magnetic charm of the man himself. Those who remember Marconi remember him for that charm and influence, which enabled him to talk his way through prejudice and opposition and win over people who had once been entirely against his ideas and schemes. Perhaps it was that combination of his parents' blood, Italian aristocracy, which naturally assumed that all doors would be opened and obstacles overcome and a touch of the blarney from his Irish mother.

There were times when the tireless genius needed to relax and for that purpose he bought a yacht — the Elettra — which he set up as a floating electronics laboratory where he could experiment in peace and without interruption.

In 1932 his company transmitted a television picture half-way round the world to Australia. But although his technicians continued pioneer work in the new medium Marconi himself showed little interest in it and did not foresee its possibilities as a means of mass entertainment as it is today.

Even so Marconi's were competing their own television against the Baird system and in 1936 victory was in their hands when the Marconi system was adopted by the BBC for the first public television service.

When Marconi died on July 10, 1937, the most fitting tribute was when every wireless station throughout the world closed down for two minutes' silence.

Clipping furnished by late member, Kenneth C. Woodman (SK - 4-4-76) Clipping was from an English newspaper. Headline inquired "Did Marconi have a touch of the Blarney?"

"MARCONI SLEPT HERE"

(Continued from Page 7)

Cunningham says the Newfoundland cable companies had spent millions on a communications system that depended on cables and they had a 50-year franchise on communications there. Their lawyers said "no" to Marconi's experiments.

"He packed up his stuff in two big trunks and headed to Cape Cod," Cunningham said.

Marconi already had a station set up there but some quick thinking on the part of a couple of Nova Scotians led to another change in plans. Cunningham says a Sydney newspaper publisher named Johnson saw the benefits in having Marconi in this province so he contacted Premier George Murray.

Marconi, fresh from his bad experience in Newfoundland, was skeptical at first, but when the Canadian government offered him \$80,000 to set up a station in Cape Breton, he accepted. In return, the government wanted to be provided with wireless service, when it was feasible, at a cost of not over 10 cents a word. Even Graham Bell offered his fellow inventor land in the Baddeck area but, as Cunningham said, "He wanted clear sailing."

Marconi thought it best to build the station on high ground near the shores of the Atlantic so there would be less interference when wireless messages were sent. As it turned out, this may not have been necessary. Early theorists believed the "clear sailing" and high points of land were necessary to compensate for the curvature of the earth. When Marconi decided that the electromagnetic waves followed the earth's curvature instead of going straight, the world was skeptical.

Cunningham said, "Some people believed him and some didn't. All the leading scientists of the world — all these fellows — said it was an impossibility. These were the smart boys."

Marconi, of course, was right as his early experiments in Cape Breton proved. He was experimenting with long wavelengths in those days and that required lots of electricity and water and coal to power the generator. The S and L Railway, like the premier and the newspaper publisher, was ready to help. A branch line was built to the Marconi house and two or three 10-ton carloads of coal were delivered by rail each week.

It was a busy time for the inventor and his staff and Cunningham says, "There wasn't enough hours in the day for him. He was a marvellous piano player" but there was little time for music or family. Cunningham can still show you Marconi's bedroom and, just across the hallway, that of his wife. The inventor was always working well into the night and didn't like to disturb his wife when he arrived home late — so, the first of two marriages ended in divorce.

"Well, you couldn't blame her in a way. The man was never home . . . work, work, work . . . away, away, away. At the end of it, he just about threw in the sponge."

Although he was anything but successful as a family man, Marconi was brilliant at his work. He continued to improve his systems of wireless communication and became a valuable member of the Italian army during the First World War, making communications an important weapon. He was almost captured by the enemy who actively searched for Marconi and his equipment.

After the war he turned his attention to short-wave wireless communication

and, in the '30s, to microwaves. When he died from a heart attack in 1937 at the age of 63, he had already done much to perfect the radio and was working on a radar system. Much of the equipment and tools he used are still resting in the diningroom of the old house today.

The Italian-born inventor came a long way from the Bologna home where he was born to an Italian father and Irish mother in 1874 (his first wife was also Irish). He was very young when he started experimenting and, at the age of 15, was able to make a bell in another part of his house ring by using electromagnetic waves. But Italy, like Newfoundland, was not kind to him in those early years.

"Everyone was against him," Cunningham said. "That's why they laughed at him, he was so young."

It's ironic how things have changed. The Italians, who once laughed at the teenager with big ideas, now make what can only be described as pilgrimages to the rickety old house near Glace Bay to see and touch what remains of one of their most famous countrymen. And Canada, which offered a home and money when Italy didn't and Newfoundland wouldn't, now seems content to let this important piece of our heritage slip away. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is to acknowledge and thank Roger Edge, Editor of The HALIFAX HERALD Ltd., publishers of the "Novascotian" for permission to rerun the story by P.T. Cusack. SOWP Member John D. Hyslop of Bedford N.S. sent us clip on this story which we think of great historical importance. We regret we do not have color facilities to bring you actual color of the house which is a weathered light brown and grey. Obviously, as mentioned it needs repair.

A History of Communications

from Spark to Satellite

A Book Review by Herbert J Scott

Author: Stanley Lienwoll

Publisher: Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017

Pages 242, Price \$14.95

By way of background, the author is by education a physicist and a mathematician and by profession an electronics engineer. He is well experienced in the subject of which he writes.

Since by training he is a mathematician, one might expect the book to lean heavily in this direction. Remarkably, however, there is only one very simple algebraic expression in the entire text. It is the familiar expression well known to every radio man and relates frequency to wavelength and velocity of propagation. Simply this and nothing more.

The text is concerned with the development of radio communication in its many forms from the time of Maxwell to our present satellite communication, radio astronomy and the probe into deep interstellar space.

Starting with the disclosures of Maxwell, the experiments by Hertz, the early works of Loomis, Popov, Lodge, Crookes, Branly, Fleming and others, the reader is led up to the work and developments of Marconi.

Wireless did not spring full grown from the mind of Marconi as Minerva was said to have sprung from the head of Zeus. Rather, as the author points out it was the result of a long series of discoveries and inventions dating back to Thales of Miletus some 2500 years ago. Actually radio communication, as the author indicates, is the result of the work of a few brilliant men starting in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The development, component by component, is traced through to the production of a practical, workable system of wireless communication. All the problems of finances, patents, regulation, international quarrels and agreements and such, that a new invention of import often meets are aired.

In a logical step by step presentation accompanied by some excellent photographs and illustrations (the accuracy of Fig. 26 is doubted), expansion of radio from the elementary detector and spark transmitter to the present state of the art is traced.

Discussions of the birth of RCA, the beginning of broadcasting and its final federal regulation, the role of the amateur in opening up the short wave spectrum for long distance communication follow in quick succession. Radio wave propagation and the effect of the ionosphere are described in both an interesting manner and in a way that anyone can readily understand.

Television and FM are introduced by a discussion of the rise in the use of short waves. It seems remarkable that a workable TV system finally emerged from the early chaos and in fighting as to which system should prevail.

How the development of radar and semiconductors served as stepping stones toward space is then considered. Some brief discussion of radar and the part played by the cavity magnetron follows. Then comes the story of semiconductors and the invention of the transistor. A very clear explanation of how the transistor performs its wonders is given. A picture of the world's first transistor is shown.

From this point the author then opens up the subject of satellite communication; commercial, amateur, and special purpose types. It is interesting to follow his story of the planetary explorations by some of the space satellites.

From here the text goes on to radio astronomy and some of the fabulous discoveries coming from this activity. Two major discoveries in this area are the Quasars and the Pulsars. They are two of the most exciting astronomical discoveries of the century.

Finally the Laser. This coherent light producing device the author describes and points out that it has a wide area of application. He provides an excellent discussion of coherent light and of how the laser works. The scientists and engineers working in the field maintain that the laser will have a far-reaching effect on the communications of the future.

The author is one of those rare persons who has the ability to present a profound subject in an easily understood manner, something that few persons with a similar background are either able or willing to do. His presentation is interesting and is easily read.



THE UNKNOWN AND UN-NAMED

Ken Johnson

A considerable amount of writing has been devoted to those who have served as wireless/radio operators aboard ships, at shore stations and point-to-point stations. Except in documentaries, little has been said about the operators who have, and still do, carried on communications in the secret services.

The first line of defense of any nation is intelligence! That is the gathering and transmitting of information regarding the thoughts, policies, plans, moves, politics, etc. of enemy operations.

The advent of wireless communications revolutionized the exchange of information between agents, or teams of agents operating in enemy territory and their headquarters stations. Prior to wireless, intelligence information was transmitted via courier in written communications. Often the courier was waylaid and eliminated while the information he was carrying was confiscated. In the event that the information was delivered, it was often "after the fact" and the enemy had conducted the operation planned prior to the receipt of such intelligence. Wireless minimized this type of situation by permitting instantaneous transmission of intelligence via the air waves.

The gathering of intelligence information, at best, is a hazardous task. The material is of no value, however, unless it is transmitted to the headquarters receiving station for analysis and action by the appropriate agency. The burden of transmitting such information from the field falls upon the wireless/radio operator. He then is the most critical link between the agents and the home station, and thus the important key to National Defense.

The wireless operator, along with his intelligence team, may be parachuted, along with his equipment, into enemy territory, landed on a beach after being transported by submarine, placed by diplomatic action or located in any number of dangerous spots by other means.

The equipment provided ranges from the bulky vacuum tube type used prior to and during World War II to the most sophisticated, solid state gear available in this day and age. The set-up and operation of the equipment is the responsibility of the operator. Any type of antenna that is recognizable is out of the question. As a result the operator must be able to load up rain gutters, available plumbing, lamp cords, bad springs or anything else that will allow him to get a signal out to his headquarters station. Should he be located in a desert or jungle area, he must devise a means of getting a wire antenna up, hidden by tree trunks, bushes or whatever ground cover is available. The axiom is the "signal must get through!"

CW is exclusively used due to the simplicity of the equipment and the necessity for security and coding. Each operator's "fist" is distinctive. The receiving operators at his headquarters station are aware of the minute elements of each operator's "swing" and recognize his touch on the key. Should the "swing" change in the slightest, the receiving operator senses immediately that something has happened to the "friend in the field." In many instances, when a field operator has been captured, the enemy has spent many hours training one of their operators to imitate, to the most exact detail, the "swing" of the expended operator's fist. They have then been able to send dis-information to the headquarters station without detection. The results of this can, of course, be disastrous!

Unlike the countless known wireless/radio operators who have saved many lives during shipboard and shore activities, the number of lives saved by the "brass pounders" in the secret services may well mount into the thousands. It is entirely possible that a few coded signals sent by such an operator, fearful of momentary discovery, may have changed the rise or fall of a government, the loss or victory of an army or the success or failure of a sea battle. The possibilities are infinite!

It would be well if we gave thought to our UNKNOWN AND UN-NAMED brother "brass pounders" in such service. Those who have been captured by the enemy, interrogated to the point of death, imprisoned, tortured and eliminated. Raise a glass to those who live in constant danger of discovery, but persist regardless of the cost, to keep our Democracy free and the light of freedom forever bright.

The Electro-lytic Interrupter

- By -
Carl D. Short



Wehnelt Interrupter

Quite frequently we will hear some old timer in the Radio field say he got started with a "spark coil" in the spark days, and I noted with considerable pleasure the cartoon in the Journal depicting the "Slop Jar" rectifier which many of us tried for a short time. But I haven't noticed anything about the Electro-lytic Interupter which was a most handy piece of equipment in the days of "open core" transformers or even the lowly Ford car's spark coil. It was easily constructed of materials not too difficult to locate back in those "spark coil" days. I first learned of it in the old well known Electro Importing Company catalogues where many a "Radio Engineer" got his basic education in "Wireless". (Not to overlook Wm. B. Duck's also very well illustrated catalogue.)

The E.I. Co's Electro-lytic Interupter had about a quart jar for the electrolyte, as best I recall was a weak solution of Sulfuric Acid and water. One electrode consisted of an inch wide strip of lead bent and cut to a point at the bottom end and the other electrode insulated from the electrolyte by a porcelain tube nearly closed at the bottom. It was equipped with a vent above the water line for the gas and water to escape back into the solution which would otherwise boil out the top of the insulating tube. When connected in series with a Ford spark coil and 110 V.A.C. it would spark in the solution between the electrode in the insulated tube and the lead anode. The strength of the solution seemed to govern the A.C. current through the coil primary. (The Ford coil vibrator was of course screwed down.) This arrangement produced a very hot spark at the secondary of a Ford coil of about 5,000 volts which was much more powerful than the same coil driven by the old number six dry cells.

Should some of you want to play with one of these interupters - a quarter inch glass tube with the end partly closed and a vent blown in the side serves very well for the insulator in the solution for a piece of number six copper wire dropped down the tube. The glass tube should be closed just enough that the #6 wire will not drop through. This wire will dissolve gradually in the solution forming a point on the bottom end. "Try it you might like it".

Editor's Note:

Pictured above is the "Wehnelt Interrupter" built and used circa 1905-1910. It was a simple and efficient unit, especially for laboratory use or work. Excellent results were experienced when proper adjustments made. The Wehnelt interupter consisted of a platinum point and a lead plate immersed in a dilute solution of sulphuric acid, the positive side of the circuit being connected to the platinum electrode and completed through the primary coil, which was connected to the lead plate.

The interruptions with this type of interrupter was extremely high ranging from 100 to 1,000 per second. The coils used with this type of interrupter should be of the best insulated kind, as otherwise the rapid breaks will soon cause a breakdown in the secondary winding. A tube is introduced in the jar through which water is circulated, keeping the solution cool in the picture shown above.

Photograph from "Operators" Wireless Telegraph & Telephone Handbook by Victor H. Laughter published by F.J. Drake & Co. 1909. This book was donated to the Society by Arthur H. Robson 545-Senior SGP of West Vancouver British Columbia. He served in 1912 at Point Grey, Vancouver BC. He became a Silent Key Jan. 1978.

THE WIRELESS PIONEERS

The six most important words:
I admit I made a mistake.
The five most important words:
You did a good job.
The four most important words:
What is your opinion.
The three most important words:
If you please.

The two most important words:
Thank you.
The one most important word:
We.
The least important word:
"I"

THE NAUTILUS STORY

Charles H. Propster

Story of US Submarine NAUTILUS/NICK received by Charles H. Propster (3553-SGP) from Ray Meyers (89-SSGP), Radioman of the NAUTILUS. This is the material as sent to the New York newspapers. It was copied by Propster while the submarine was being towed by the battleship USS WYOMING.

ENROUTE COPENHAGEN, DENMARK, EARLY JUNE 1931: LEAVING DOCK WITH ESCORT OF ICE-PATROL BOAT. WE WERE ON OUR WAY ON FIRST LEG OF OUR ADVENTURE TO NORTH POLE. WITH TWO ENGINES, SPEED WAS GRATIFYING. THINGS SETTLED DOWN NICELY - QUARTERS WERE MADE SHIPSHAPE AND PAINTED. BUCKETS OF DIRTY ODMENTS LEFT BY RECONSTRUCTION GANG WERE HEAVED OVERSIDE DAILY.

CREW ALL SEA VETERANS, MOST OF THEM WITH YEARS OF SUBMARINE EXPERIENCE. MADE SELVES TRUE ENGINEERS THOUGH OVERWORKED. MUCH TO BE DONE. THEIR COMPARTMENTS WERE CLOSED DOWN ALMOST FROM START TO PREVENT SLOPPING WAVES FROM COMING DOWN HATCHES. MOTOR ROOM, JUST ABAFT OF ENGINES, INCH DEEP UNDER WATER LEVEL, HAD STAGNANT AIR DUE TO BAD VENTILATION. SECOND ENGINEER RIGGS SUDDENLY COLLAPSED WHILE WORKING THERE. WAS THOUGHT HE HAD BEEN OVERCOME BY DREADED CARBON MONOXIDE; BUT HE HAD BEEN THROUGH THAT BEFORE; HIS CALM TEMPERAMENT SAW HIM THROUGH.

CREW CONSISTED MOSTLY OF MEN WITH MECHANICAL SKILL. MANAGED TO KEEP AUXILIARY RUNNING SPASMODICALLY. BANKS DOWN AND NOT MUCH AIR; BATTERIES LOW; THOUSAND MILES FROM LAND. WE WERE IN DESPERATE FIX. DANEHOWER ALWAYS READY IN EMERGENCY. RIGGS CAME THROUGH WITH LITTLE WORSE THAN HEAVY HEAD FOR HOUR OR SO BUT WEAKENED FROM LOW AIR BANKS. THIS WAS MUCH TO OUR DISCOMFORT LATER. ALTHOUGH BATTERIES LOW FROM OUTSET WE DIDNT WORRY ABOUT THEM AS WE EXPECTED TO BOOST THEM DAILY AT SEA. ON JUNE 14TH STARBOARD ENGINE WAS ABOUT TO BE STARTED FOR THE PURPOSE, BUT BRUSHES ON MOTOR WENT BAD. ANY GOOD SUBMARINE MAN AGREES MUST HAVE ONE GOOD ENGINE ATTACHED TO GENERATOR. WE HAD ONE GOOD ENGINE AND BAD MOTOR; ONE BAD ENGINE WITH GOOD MOTOR. DESPERATE FIX; COULD NOT CHARGE BATTERIES; NO CURRENT TO START OTHER ENGINE. AIR BANKS LOWER. WE THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM LAND.

DANEHOWER, IN CHARGE OF WORKING BOAT AND CREW, THOUGHT IT WISE TO SIGNAL PASSING SS INDEPENDENCE HALL, ASKING HER TO STAY WITH US UNTIL WE SAW WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH PORT MOTOR. SEAS STILL RUNNING HIGH AND WE ARE STILL BATTENED DOWN. SKIPPER NAVIGATING FROM CONNING TOWER. WE GETTING AIR THROUGH ICE DRILL.

NO ONE KNEW WHAT THE NAUTILUS WOULD DO OUT OF CONTROL. SOME SAILORS EVEN TRIED TO PERSUADE US THAT THE SUPERSTRUCTURE WOULD BE SWEEPED AWAY FIRST VIOLENT STORM BUT WE BELIEVED STRUCTURE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG AND STURDY. OUR FAITH JUSTIFIED AS IT IS STILL WITH US INTACT ALTHOUGH IT TOOK SOME TERRIBLE BEATINGS. SINCE THEN OUR FLYING BRIDGE, A CONTRIVANCE OF LIGHT WIRE AND CANVAS, HAS CARRIED AWAY BUT A TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN PUT UP FOR THE ATLANTIC CROSSING AND FINE WEATHER ONLY.

THE INDEPENDENCE HALL SIGNALLED BATTLESHIPS USS WYOMING AND ARKANSAS COMMANDED BY ADMIRAL BLOCH. THOSE SHIPS CAME ABEAM AFTER SHORT WHILE, AND THE INDEPENDENCE HALL PROCEEDED ON HER WAY. BATTLESHIPS NOW WITH US. WHEN WEATHER MODERATES, IF AUXILIARY CHARGING ENGINE NOT PERFORMING SATISFACTORILY, WE MAY ASK FOR TOW UNTIL GENERATOR FIXED. BATTERIES NOW SO LOW THAT LONG-RANGE COMMUNICATION LIMITED. MEYERS CLEVERLY ARRANGED COMMUNICATION BY TAPPING ANTENNA AFTER HETERODYNING OTHER RECEIVER ON INDEPENDENCE HALL WHICH IN TURN RELAYED TO THE WYOMING.

NAUTILUS WEATHERING SPLENDIDLY BUT LURCHING IN HEAVY SEAS PERIODICALLY. CARRIED AWAY BUNK TRUNKS AND ALL LOOSE ARTICLES. WE LIVING ON COLD VICTUALS WITH HOT COFFEE. CONDITIONS NOT SERIOUS EXCEPT FOR GENERATOR TROUBLE.

MESSAGE FROM WYOMING: "WILL STEAM SLOWLY BY AND SHOOT LINE." WAS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS ON NAUTILUS' DECK, SEAS SLAPPING FIRST ON ONE SIDE AND THEN THE OTHER; WASHED OVER NARROW DECK. OCCASIONALLY AN ANGRY BREAKER WOULD SWAMP ENTIRE DECK FROM STERN TO BRIDGE. OUR HATCHES CLOSED EXCEPT FOR SHORT PERIODS TO GET AIR BELOW. DECK WATCH DONNED LIFE BELTS, SNAPPED THROUGH HATCH, ONE AT A TIME. CLUNG TO LIFE-



Nautilus Under The Ice Caps 1931

LINES RUN PARALLEL TO DECK, THERE TO HANG PERILOUSLY WATCHING WYOMING'S MOVEMENTS. UNDER CONTROL OF HER SKIPPER SHE CAME UP SLOWLY. GRIM-LOOKING AND DETERMINED, WYOMING'S BOWS HEAVING WITH THE SWELL SO THAT HER FOREFOOT SHOWED CLEAR OF THE WATER.

NAUTILUS ROSE AND FELL FULLY TWENTY FEET WITH EACH BIG WAVE. BATTLESHIP DARED NOT APPROACH TOO CLOSE OTHERWISE MIGHT CRUSH US LIKE EGGHELL BENEATH HER BULGING BLISTERED SIDE. HER DECKS LINED WITH SAILORS, MARINES AND MIDSHIPMEN, THEIR BLUE UNIFORMS AND TOPCOATS FLAPPING IN WIND. SOME GROUPED ON GUN PLATFORM WATCHED AND TOOK INSTRUCTIVE PART IN WHAT WAS GOING ON. SLOWLY FROM SOME DISTANCE AWAY WYOMING CREPT ABEAST. THERE WAS FLASH OF GUN AND BURST OF SMOKE, AND LIFELINE SHOT OUT FROM HER SIDE. BUT IT SNARLED AND FELL SHORT. THEN OTHER GUN SHOT FROM SHOULDER SPAT FIRE AND A WAVERING LIGHT LINE TOWED BY PROJECTILE SWUNG HIGH UP AND OVER OUR BOWS WITH ROUSING CHEERS FROM SAILORS.

DANEHOWER, CLARK AND CRILLEY RUSHED FOR THE LINE. HEAVED IT IN FAST AND FURIOUS. DANGEROUS WORK ON SLIPPERY DECKS WITH WAVES DASHING OVER THEM. SOON STOUTER ROPE MADE FAST TO OUR RAIL. WE HAD SLOUGHED INTO LEE OF WYOMING AND OUR MOVEMENTS NOT SO VIOLENT.

OUR SKIPPER ORDERED ALL AVAILABLE HANDS ON DECK: ENGINEERS, ELECTRICIANS, COOKS, SEAMEN, WHO ALL CAME TUMBLING OUT OF HATCHES, SHIRTS FLYING, PANTS UNBUTTONED, BOOTS ADRIFT. BUT LIFEBELTS SECURELY FASTENED. "HEAVE HER DOWN, BOYS, HEAVE HER DOWN!" WAS GENERAL YELL ON DECKS. WE PULLED AND TUGGED AT SIXES AND SEVENS. IT WAS MANKILLING LABOR. COLD HANDS CHAFED AGAINST ROUGH NEW ROPE. NO FIRM FOOTING ON NARROW SLIPPERY METAL DECK; ONLY SAFEGUARD WAS SLENDER LIFELINE SLUNG FROM BRIDGE TO BOW. AS MANY AS POSSIBLE HUNG FAR OVER THIS LINE TO EXERT ALL STRENGTH ON HAWSER, RECKLESS OF PERSONNEL SAFETY. LIFELINE GROANED AT BREAKING STRESS POINT, THEN UNUSUAL HEAVY SURGE CAUSED IT TO GIVE WAY, CARRYING TWO MEN WITH IT.

BUT FORTUNATELY THE HEAVING LINE HELD TIGHT. FOR MOMENT MEN'S BODIES SWUNG IN AIR FAR OVER SIDE BUT THEY HELD FAST WITH WHITE KNUCKLES UNTIL COMRADES HAULED THEM IN, HALF DROWNED. THIS BROUGHT ANOTHER ROUSING CHEER FROM SAILORS ABOARD WYOMING. PARTED LINE LEFT US NOTHING TO BRACE AGAINST. WE ALMOST STOMPED THE SKIPPER WHILE CARRYING A BIGHT AROUND AFT ICE-DRILL. CRILLEY FOUND A HANDY BUT CUMBERSOME BILLY FROM SOMEWHERE AND WITH MANY HANDS AS POSSIBLE ON ITS TAIL WE BEGAN HAULING.



LT. COMDR. RAY. E. MEYERS, USN(RET). SOWP-89, S-SGP. Charter member SOWP since 1969. Famous Amateur Call - W6MLZ. President OOTC. First ship SS Commanche/KVC 1912

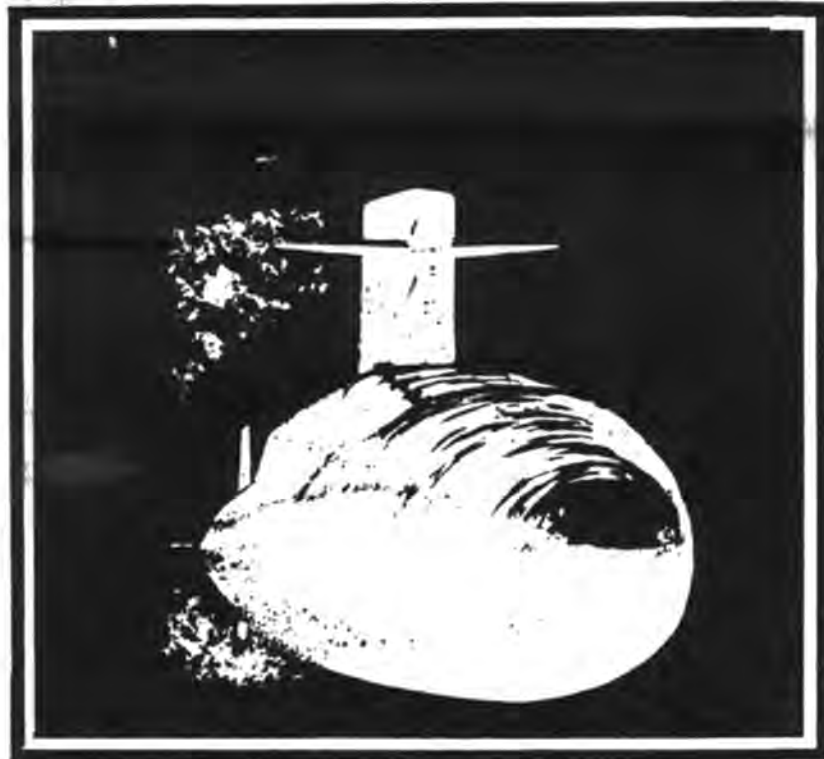


BY THIS TIME EVERYONE STRENUOUSLY AT WORK WITHOUT RESPITE FOR THREE HOURS, ALL DRENCHED REPEATEDLY. COLD, SHIVERING IN KEEN WIND DESPITE HEAVY LABOR. WOULD HEAVE ON LINE FOR MOMENT THEN LAY TO UNTIL STOPPER WAS MADE FAST, THEN BACK UP CAREFULLY FOR ANOTHER HITCH. INCH BY INCH THE HAWSER NEARED OUR HULL.

DARKNESS FELL BEFORE THE LONG END OF TOWING LINE WAS IN SIGHT, LENDING MISERY TO SCENE. TWO POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS FROM BATTLESHIP EXTREMELY USEFUL AND MOST ESSENTIAL FOR OUR SAFETY. SOON IT WAS PITCH DARK BEYOND WIDTH OF SEARCHLIGHT BEAMS. CANVAS BRIDGE PROVIDED US WITH SOME SHELTER FROM WIND BUT ALSO CUT OFF LIGHT. WORK MOSTLY CARRIED ON BY SENSE OF TOUCH AND SOUND OF WEARY VOICES. MY POSITION WAS ABAFT OF ICE-DRILL. I WAS MANNING ITS TAIL, TAKING IN SLACK, EXPOSED TO WAVES AND WIND. "WATERPROOF" OVERALLS HAD CEASED TO BE OF SERVICE; SEA CAME THROUGH NECKBANDS, UP TROUSER LEGS AND SLEEVES. NEVERTHELESS MY POSITION GAVE GENERAL VIEW OF WHOLE IMPRESSIVE SCENE. OUR MEN, CLOSE AT HAND, THEIR FIGURES GROTESQUELY BULKED BY LIFE-PRESERVERS, MOVED AND SHOUTED, SILHOUETTED IN STRONG LIGHT BEAMS. EACH TIME NAUTILUS DIPPED HER BOW INTO WAVES IT WAS LIKE AN ARROW PLUNGING INTO A VOID. WITH EACH ROLL DECKS LAPPED GREEN WATER. PLAY OF WYOMING'S SEARCHLIGHTS FROM 500 FEET AWAY ON OUR WIRELESS TRIPODS CAST LONG BLACK SHADOWS LIKE SOME GNARLED MONSTERS.

COULD SEE WIERD WRIGGLING FORMS IN WATER ROUND

MESSAGE FROM WYOMING: "WE LEAVE THE NAUTILUS WISHING HER GOD SPEED IN THEIR ADVENTURE TO THE NORTH POLE AND MAY SHE HAVE LEARNED BY THESE EXPERIENCES SUFFICIENTLY TO INSTALL SAFETY DEVICES WHICH WILL SEND THEM OFF ON THE NEXT LEG OF THEIR JOURNEY FEELING THAT SUCCESS WILL BE THEIRS."



U.S.S. ARKANSAS - NBV

ABOUT US: MYRIADS OF FISH ATTRACTED BY LIGHT. STRANGE SIGHT! A PASSENGER LINER WENT PAST, HER DECKS AND SALOON LIGHTS GLOWING. A WANING MOON FLICKERED FITFULLY IN SCUDDING CLOUDS. OUR MEN PRACTICALLY EXHAUSTED, STILL THEY HEAVED AND SHOUTED, BUT THEIR SHOUTS WERE FEEBLE. THERE WERE MUTTERED CURSES. THE SINLESS SAFETY-VALVE OF SUFFERING SEAMEN HEARD FROM TIME TO TIME. AT LAST A CLANG OF METAL ON METAL TOLD US THE IRON SHACKLE HAD FOUND ITS PLACE. THIS BROUGHT CHEERS, BUT NOT OF TOTAL SUCCESS BECAUSE WE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE IN THE DARK WITH NO LIFTING FORWARD TO SWING HAWSER END TO MEET OUR TOWING PENDANT. ALL THAT COULD BE DONE FOR THE MOMENT WAS TO MAKE FAST AS BEST WE COULD AND WAIT FOR DAYLIGHT. EVERYTHING SECURED AFT TO BEST OF OUR ABILITY. SKIPPER, SCHLOSSBACH AND CRILLEY WENT FORWARD AT LIFE RISK TO SECURE THINGS THERE. IN A VIOLENT HEAVE OF SHIP CRILLEY WENT SPINNING OVER SIDE, BUT HOLDING ON TO LINE, WAS HAULED BACK BY COMPANIONS WITH BADLY WRENCHED BACK. WHEN EVERYTHING MADE FAST, ALL BUT SINGLE DECK WATCH WENT BELOW.

WHILE PEELING OFF OUR SOPPING GARMENTS WE HEARD RATTLING ON CONNING TOWER. ALL LINES PARTED: FIVE HOURS WORK IN VAIN. THE LINES CHAFING ON SLED-DECK RUNWAYS USED FOR ICE WORK HAD CUT THROUGH. NOTHING TO DO BUT DRIFT AND TOSS. THE WYOMING'S SEARCHLIGHT BEAMS SEEMED TO BE OUR ONLY REFUGE. WE HAD NO LIGHTS OF OUR OWN; DANGEROUS TO US FOR SHIPS PASSING. WE COULDN'T EVEN SEE OUT. SEA GETTING WORSE. COMPARTMENTS REEKING: VARIOUS NOXIOUS SMELLS. COMMUNICATION ABSOLUTELY CUT OFF EVEN FROM WYOMING NEARBY. WE HUDDLED LIKE RATS IN THE DARK. NEARLY EVERY LIGHT TURNED OFF TO SAVE ENERGY; ONLY DIM DEEP BLUE NIGHT LIGHTS ON IN SLEEPING QUARTERS.

LATER ON THE AUXILIARY ENGINE REWARDED US BY A CONTINUOUS RUN OF EIGHT HOURS TO PUT SOME JUICE IN BATTERIES. SO A FEW LIGHTS NOW AVAILABLE. MEN'S HEALTH NOT TOO BAD DESPITE CLOSE CONFINEMENT AND EXHAUSTING WORK. ALL EATING AGAIN. WE HAVE COLD SALMON, TOMATOES AND HADDOCK, UNAPPETIZINGLY WASHED DOWN WITH WATER STAINED WITH RED LEAD FROM RECENTLY PAINTED TANKS.

THIS MORNING A BOAT FROM WYOMING BROUGHT US BREAD, APPLES AND HOT BREAKFAST. THIS WITH SUNSHINE GREATLY RAISED CREW'S SPIRITS. TOW LINE NOW SECURED. WE ARE ON OUR WAY.

Member, Charles H. Propster, USN-Ret (Lt. Cmdr). 3553-SGP [K6GBR] served on the USS Wyoming/NITR during a midshipman cruise in 1931. He reported receiving a very weak SOS on a morning in June of that year. Proceeded to the radio DF station topside and completed contact with Ray Meyers (89-S-SGP) who was Radio Officer aboard the Submarine Nautilus/NICX at the time. The press reporting the near tragedy was handled by Meyers and Propster under extremely difficult conditions by Ray keying an oscillating receiver and the very weak signal picked up by "Chuck" Propster. It might be noted that the first operator assigned the Nautilus (Ex-USS-0-12) Willard Grimmer was washed overboard off the "Jersey Coast". Meyers then was assigned as relief operator. Thank member "Chuck" Propster for his story.

Ye Olden Days

These young bucks of today who flip a toggleswitch and start talking immediately do not know what they have missed. Herewith the starting instructions for NBA's Federal Arc at Darien:

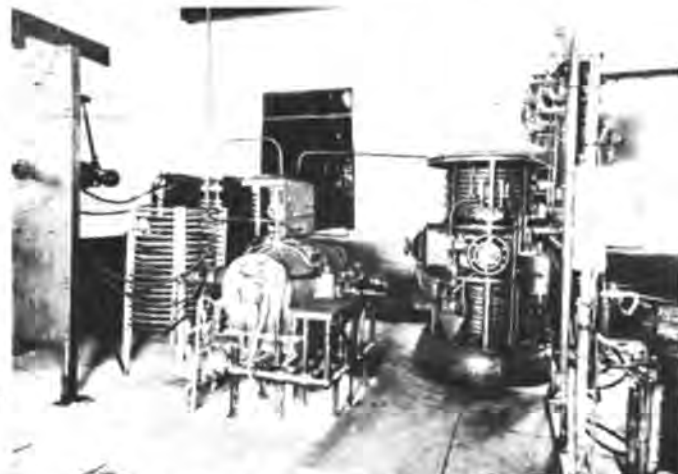
- *Unground main antenna and close switch to arc.
- *Start keying machine and close breaker, exciter and keying line switches, adjusting to 100 volts.
- *Close control line switch and cut in main relay feeders.
- *Close 440-volt motor-generator supply switch and starting controller switch.
- *Press start button and hold in until second clapper closes.
- *Close generator paralleling switches.
- *Close main arc breakers.
- *Turn on cooling water and adjust pressure to chamber and anode.
- *Adjust kerosene and alcohol needle valves for one drop of mixed liquid per second.
- *Close d.c. auxiliary switch and start carbon rotating motor.
- *Adjust main generators to approximately 600 volts with balanced output current.
- *Close number 1 clapper.
- *Strike arc.

- *Draw flame to 40 amperes.
- *Close number 2 clapper.
- *Adjust flame to less than 50 amperes.
- *Close number 3 clapper.
- *Adjust flame to 50 amperes.
- *Close number 4 clapper and adjust for maximum output.
- *Close 'D' plug on line 100.
- *Notify Balboa "GA D4."

NBA - DARIEN, 1928

Not many have seen a naked ARC. This is the Federal 100KW which put 200 Amps into the Triatic and has probably been heard by all oldtimers. On deck is the Polsen 'thing' which was removed shortly after the picture was taken. To right of arc we see control panel end view. The sheet iron magnet covers have been removed to allow replacing of pipes carrying cooling water from chamber and door to the spill funnel on ar base.

M.G. Abernathy collection



BY PAT BUCHANAN



Letter from Jerusalem

LETTER TO THE EDITOR
FROM JERUSALEM

I am employed as a Radio Officer with the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization in Jerusalem, having been with them for about six months, and I have already been posted on temporary duty to Beirut, Lebanon.

Jerusalem is the Middle East headquarters for all U.N. activity. We maintain a radio circuit to the following missions: Ismailia, Egypt; Amman, Jordan; Beirut, Lebanon; Damascus, Syria; Tiberias and Gaza, Israel; and Naqoura on the Lebanon-Israeli border. We also have direct contact with both Geneva and New York via our own satellite channels. Local circuits to our Middle East mission are on short wave by either RTTY/radio teleprinter or Morse code, though I am afraid that Morse is used only as a standby nowadays.

Traffic clearing is quite easy as our RTTY circuits operate at 100 wpm.

I first started in radio when I was eight years old, which was not so long ago as I was born in 1942 in Scotland where I lived until I was 18. My introduction to radio came about through my uncle who had been a radioman in the Submarine Service during WW-II. He had returned from the U.S.A. where he had gone to work.

I had always been fascinated by the radio as a child. I would sit beside it for hours trying to figure out what it was all about. The sets we had in Scotland in those days were relatively big, usually in a veneered cabinet, with long wave, medium wave, and invariably 2 or 3 shortwave bands, all displayed on a large multicolored dial that lit up. Two batteries were used: one of about 120 volts and a 1.5-v lead-acid type that required frequent charging. The antenna was always a long wire which was considered vital.

I really used to wonder how all those people could live inside such a small box. I also wondered how you could turn a knob and hear another person speaking or music playing.

I knew that my uncle was a radio expert, so whenever he came home from the States, I got hold of him and asked him "Where do all those people live inside the radio?" It was a Sunday afternoon just after the midday meal with many relatives there. He just smiled and asked if I really did want to know. Of course, I said yes, and from then on my life has been one thing and one thing only—and I have no regrets whatsoever.

Upon my uncle's return to the U.S.A. he promptly sent me a wireless textbook written by a man named Scroggie. He also sent me a McKelroy bug key and a Morse manual which contained a circuit for a code practice oscillator.

Finding parts in those days in Scotland was very nearly impossible as we had just about got over the business of WW-II, and radio parts were not considered urgent necessities by the shopkeepers. I managed to get a supply of parts from a neighborhood

junk yard. The proprietor had a contract with the local airfield by which he bought up all the old bombers and "melted" them down. I found that when he bought them the planes still had all their radio equipment more-or-less intact, so I soon got to work removing any likely-looking black boxes.

My uncle, who came home about twice a year, kept me on the straight and narrow because he was a fanatic about Morse, giving me tests at every opportunity. "You must sound like a tape," he used to say....Don't forget the spaces between characters are just as important as the characters themselves....Your Morse is your voice.... Be proud of it."

Later on I realized what invaluable information I had been given. I still take great joy in using a straight key, and even get much pleasure with the Vibroplex; not the case now with electronic keyers which make the dots, dashes and spaces for you. I always remember my uncle when someone remarks that my keying is the best they have heard.

When I was 18 I joined the army and became a radio operator in the Signal Intelligence Division. This work is completely absorbing, demanding a higher standard of ability than is normally required.

I was posted to the Middle East where I served four years between Cyprus, Aden, Bahrain, and Yemen. I received some decorations for active service duty in the latter post when Britain was in the final stages of giving Aden her independence. I was discharged from the army after a final two-year hitch in Germany, having reached the grade of First Class Special Operator, as we were called. My six years of army service were over.

I then joined the British Diplomatic Wireless Service as a Radio Officer; I was seconded to Radio Intelligence as an instructor in cryptography (Code Machines); also in Morse and its use by potential enemy countries, etc. While in the Diplomatic Wireless Service I was posted to New Delhi, India, and also to some Iron Curtain countries on short term appointments, none of which I can disclose.

I left the Diplomatic Service as the strain of work was affecting my marriage, as a consequence of which I was divorced. I worked in London for nine years for various private companies as an electronic technician (for which I am qualified), working on marine radar and communications equipment, also in the hi-fi and TV side of the business.

I joined the U.N. last year as I had a hankering to get back into radio operating. Perhaps it's because I'm older now—I don't know, but I'll only serve my one year fixed appointment and not ask for an extension as I am not over-happy with life in Jerusalem and the general working conditions here.

Some years ago I had the chance to go to the Antarctic as a radio operator/technician but I turned the offer down as I had just received a promotion at work. I think when

I return to England in November, 1979, I'll pursue something of that nature, though I don't think volunteers are required from Britain any more.

Here in Israel it has become very difficult to obtain a license to operate amateur radio. The mountain of red tape placed in the way of getting a call sign from the authorities is very discouraging. Many of my colleagues who have been here (longer) have had a great deal of trouble, with very little result in their attempts to become licensed. Perhaps in time the Israeli government will modify its attitude so that all hams can have a happy time on the air.

About my equipment: I am using three receivers: YAESU FT101E, Heathkit SB303, and YAESU FRG-7. My main antenna is a 2-element beam for the 10, 15 and 20 meter ham bands. I have it up about 60 ft, heading at 300° (I don't have the rotator). My second antenna is a Trap Dipole which covers from 80 to 10 meters, on the same heading as the beam; it brings in the Far East, Australia, Japan and the like.

Should any members of the Society require a signal report for activity on any band at any time for as long a period as they need, I will be happy to oblige. Best times for DX listening here are between 1600 and 0400 GMT. The 15 meter band is open all the time and a great many rare ham call signs can be heard if you stick to it. Radio conditions on the short waves here at the moment are a bit patchy as the frequencies above 10 MHz tend to be noisy for days on end.

I would like to congratulate the S.O.W.P. on the very interesting Journal. I have been completely fascinated by it. Pleased to see that it covers a period of particular interest to me: before 1940. I find all the articles and photos of great interest and have recommended the Society to a number of former colleagues who have been on ships as radiomen when we needed them very badly in the war years.

I am constantly on the air listening to ham frequencies as well as to ship bands. I am on the lookout for any Society ham radio net activity and I'll report on any signals I hear.

I regret never having been a seagoing operator; I was put off it from the start because I suffer from chronic seasickness, even at the very sight of a ship!

I am interested in all aspects of radio communication, being a collector of old equipment from the very early days: Morse keys, earphones, magazines and textbooks. Sadly, nowadays, a lot of old equipment has completely vanished.

73s to all. -Pat (P.O.G.Buchanan)
FSO R/O
UNTSO Box 20
Grand Central P.O.
New York NY 10017

P.S. For cat lovers: I have a 10-week old Siamese female who is completely in love with the Vibroplex! Her favorite toy by a mile. Problem is—she's left-handed!
P.R.

Just for Fun

THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, ABOUT TO CONSIDER THE GRANTING OF A LICENSE TO A NEW ORLEANS, LA LAWYER'S RADIO CLIENT, ASKED FOR TITLES TO THE LAND ON WHICH THE PROPOSED ANTENNA WAS TO BE ERECTED. THESE ARRIVED FOR AS FAR BACK AS 1803. THE FCC WROTE ASKING "Who owned the land before that?" THE LAWYER RESPONDED:

Gentlemen:
Your letter regarding titles in Case No. 1819156 has been received. I note you wish titles to extend further than I have presented them. I was unaware that any educated man in the world failed to know that Louisiana was purchased from France by the United States in 1803.

The title to the land was acquired by France by right of conquest from Spain. The land came into the possession of Spain by right of discovery made in 1492 by an Italian sailor named Christopher Columbus, who had been granted the privilege of seeking a new route to India by the then reigning monarch, Queen Isabella of Spain. The good Queen being a pious woman and careful about titles (almost as careful, I might add, as the FCC), took the precaution of securing the blessings of the Pope of Rome upon the voyage before she sold her jewels to help Columbus.

Now the Pope, as you know, is the emissary of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, and God, it is commonly accepted, made the world. Therefore, I believe it is safe to presume that he also made that part of the United States called Louisiana, and I hope to hell you are satisfied."

Heisted from the fine Amateur Publication "FLORIDA SKIP" published by SOWP Member Andy Clark -1048-V down in Florida. The article 'filched' was submitted by Ted Sheppers, WB4LFF. [Thank you both]

BONDAGE

"Whoosh-Whooc,"
Said the sea
To me.

"You think you are buried in books, Egad,
And mechanical jiggers
With columns of figgers
To keep me out of your thoughts, my lad,
But don't you see
That can never be
So long as the books are open to me
And salt laden breezes, unbidden and free
Speak of me?"
Said the sea,
"Whoosh-Whooc."

"Whoosh-Whooc,"
Laughed the sea
At me.

"You're a-breathin' the dust-laden air of the town,
But all of the while
As in land lubber style
You're pickin' 'em up and puttin' 'em down,
Your soul is mine
To pickle in brine
And bleach on the sands of memory.
This guy Mephisto has nothing on me.
Whoosh!" said the sea,
"I chortle with glee,
Who-o-o-o-e-e!"

J. A. Q.



ANNOUNCING

THE NEW MATHEWS
3 TUBE SUPER RECEIVERNOTE: NO SPEAKER
REQUIREMENT WITH
THIS MODEL.

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS

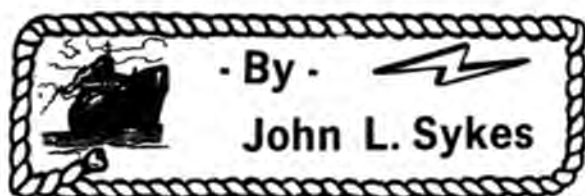
MODEL GIRL CHRISTINE FRANCES
SERIAL # 1
SENSITIVITY — 100 HIGH, BUT IMPRACTICAL TO ADD VOLUME CONTROL AT THIS TIME.
SELECTIVITY — ABSOLUTE, (THE ONLY ONE WE CAN HEAR.)
BAND PASS — ENTIRE AUDIO RANGE.
TV INTERFERENCE — STOPS ALL PROGRAMS.
COLOR — SLIGHTLY PINK (WILL BLEACH OUT IN TIME.)
PWR REQUIREMENT — DOZENS OF DAPERS — FEE FROM THE PRECEDING STAGE.
CONTRACTORS — KEN AND MARION MATHEWS, 24 MARCH 1951 - 3:40 PM
WEIGHT — 51bs 6 1/2oz (INCREASES WITH AGE)

NOT FOR SALE

Member "Ken" Mathews (3194-P) and XYL Marion used a novel and unique announcement some 30 plus years ago (before transistors) to launch a new "Brass Pounder-ess" into orbit. We thought that since "bottles" are a thing of the past (well almost), some of our members might enjoy early day circuitry



"SHIP AHOY"



It is said that no man ever forgets his first love whoever she be and certainly no sailor ever forgets his first ship, be she liner or tramp. I joined my first ship, the S/S WHITWOOD, an 1100-ton collier during the first week of March, 1919, and in some ways it seems but yesterday. According to the staff clerk at the Newcastle office of the Marconi Company, she was a "brand-new vessel" currently loading coal at the port of Sunderland. Well, I had now been tramping the Sunderland waterfront for the best part of two hours and there wasn't a brand-new vessel in sight, only a dozen or so dirty-looking tubs I wouldn't be found dead on. My two brand-new suitcases were getting heavy and I was getting anxious. What if the Staff Clerk had made a mistake and my ship was at Blyth, South Shields or even Middleborough, all ports served by the Newcastle office.

A rather scruffily dressed man striding purposefully down the quay seemed to be looking at me; perhaps he could help. "Excuse me, Mister, I wonder if you know where a ship called the WHITWOOD is loading?" "Yes, about half a mile further along I'm going that way." "Oh, thank you. If you'll help me with one of my cases I'll give you a shilling." Without a word the heavier case was taken from my hand and at a pace I could scarcely manage we set off down the quay. I paid no attention to the ships we passed on the way but when my companion stopped at the foot of a steep gangway and announced, "Here she is. This is the WHITWOOD," my heart sank and my spirits rebelled. "The WHITWOOD? It can't be; she's a new ship." Don't worry, son, she'll look new again when she's washed down; it's only coal dust." Dumbly I handed over my shilling and made to take my case. "I'll help you up the gangway. You can't manage both. Follow me." On reaching the deck my porter called out to a begrimed individual emerging from what I later found was the ship's galley. "This is the new Sparks, Steward. Show him to his cabin and make him at home, then bring me a cup of tea."

Captain! Oh, great heavens, what had I done! Quickly the possessor of my tip disappeared up some steps and I was left with the grinning steward who had not been slow to take in the situation. Choking back his unseemly laughter, he picked up my heavy case from the coal dust and addressed me. "You'll have something to tell your grandchildren, Sparks, but don't worry, we are still in port and it's the captain's claim that in port he is plain John Smith, Mister John Smith. But tomorrow morning when we get to sea he will be Admiral Bloody Nelson, so don't forget it."

After conducting me to my cabin-cum-radio room on the boat deck, the steward showed me the bathroom "no hot water in port" and then took me to the officers' saloon where he pointed out my seat. "Meals are at 8, 12 and 5 o'clock but usually in a home port you will have to look after yourself. I am here this afternoon only because my wife is away from home. Sit down a few minutes and when I've brewed a pot of tea for the skipper I'll bring you a cup. Then get out of that posh uniform into some old clothes which is all we wear on these ships."

The S/S WHITWOOD was what used to be called, and for all I know may still be called, a "weekly boat" meaning that the crew were paid weekly rather than monthly.

After less than four weeks' experience as radio officer of the coasting vessel S/S WHITWOOD, my employer, the Marconi International Marine Communication Company, considered me ready for deep-sea duties. I was appointed to the S/S KASSALA, another coal carrier but twice the size of my first ship and loading for Genoa. The romance of my situation, twister-in to merchant navy foreign-going officer in less than twelve short months seemed almost too good to be true. Italy had always held a special place in my heart ever since making up my mind to become a radio officer. After all, my boss, Senator Marconi, was an Italian and every schoolboy knows that Christopher himself was Genoese and sailed from Genoa to find the New World.

The voyage from Sunderland to Genoa through the notorious Bay of Biscay, past the mighty rock of Gibraltar and across the eastern Mediterranean was scheduled to take twelve days and the good ship KASSALA did it on time. The dreaded Bay of Biscay turned out to be as calm as a duck pond. I was both disap-

pointed and relieved. Gibraltar was as impressive as I had imagined and the Mediterranean was blue and smooth. Nevertheless on the early morning of the twelfth day I dressed in my best uniform and was ready to go ashore hours before we tied up. Noticing that the Chief Engineer was still in his working clothes I asked in some surprise, "Aren't you going ashore, Chief?" "I've been here before, Sparks, and I don't think I'll bother the beach this time." His words staggered me and I never guessed how short a time it would be before I echoed them.

I had no duties in port and as soon as the port doctor and the customs officials had completed their routine duties I was free to step ashore. The Great War had ended just six months earlier and I was a bit apprehensive as to how this late enemy country would receive me -- with clenched fists or open arms? I could not possibly have guessed.

Immediately upon walking through the dock gates I was attacked; no, not attacked; besieged by a host of twenty or more thin, ragged and very dirty urchins all chanting the one English sentence they had been taught, "Johnny, Johnny, you come sleep my sister, only fifty lira."

So that was it! We had defeated them in war and now they were endeavoring to subvert us by propogating their pernicious siesta habit. Certainly they must be in a bad way if beds had to be shared but they were not going to catch me. From the appearance of the touts themselves it was certain that the beds would have fleas and probably bugs as well. Besides it was only ten o'clock in the morning and I was not going to hang around three hours just to indulge in an afternoon nap. With great difficulty and only after scattering a handful of small coins, I managed to escape my besiegers and set about exploring my first foreign city.

The city was disappointing, rundown and shabby. The evidence of poverty and defeat, both moral and physical, was everywhere. Shops empty of goods and the people on the streets empty of hope. The buildings that had appeared white and stately when viewed from a few miles out at sea revealed themselves on close up as dirty grey tenements, dilapidated and neglected. Several times during the course of the next hour I was stopped many times and, in sign language, asked for a cigarette but I was a non-smoker and unable to oblige.

The few items for sale that I did see looked very cheap in terms of the prevailing rate of exchange though doubtless expensive to the local people. I was particularly impressed by the sight of a magnificent lobster bearing a price tag of 20 lira (about a shilling). I would buy it and present it to the officers' mess. It would make a welcome change from salt beef and dry hash. The smiling shopkeeper, in response to my pointing finger, lifted the lobster from the window onto the counter and then picked up a large knife. "No, no, total, completo." I signalled that I required the whole lobster at which the patron placed it on a pair of scales and said something in Italian. Unable to understand I handed him a pencil and memoed that he should put it in writing. This he did: 850 lira! Indignantly I pointed to the price tag, 20 lira. I was informed in passionate language that even I could understand that the price was 20 lira per 25 grammes or just about an ounce and the scales read 1 1/2 kilogrammes. With my face redder than the lobster I fled the shop to imprecations very like "perfidious albion" as spoken in Italian. It was time to return to my ship and dinner of salt pork and dried peas.

However, returning to the ship proved less simple than I had imagined. I had not taken particular notice of where she was lying. After all the S/S KASSALA was easily recognizable on account of her yellow funnel. On entering the dock area I looked around for my ship and to my consternation there wasn't a yellow funneled vessel in the harbour, not one! I was in a state of near panic. Had my floating home been moved around some corner or had she sailed and left me to those sleepy sisters and irate shopkeepers? Where was the British consulate? At the end of a dreadful half hour I managed to find an Italian seaman who had a smattering of English and to him I explained my plight. I was told not to worry and that in exchange for five English shillings, handed over in advance, he would guide me to my ship. Never was money handed over more willingly nor guide followed more closely. We walked not more than four hundred yards and there was the dear old KASSALA but now with a black funnel. The explanation turned out to be very simple; the ship had been sold whilst on the high seas and after I had left her three hours earlier the funnel and masts had been repainted in the new owner's colours. Gratefully I ate my pork and peas followed by rice and prunes before retiring to my cabin and a British siesta in my own bunk followed by a game of draughts with the Chief. I had had enough of foreign parts for one day.



Early Days at 'KOK' Letter from George P. Dery

Dear Bill:

Answering your letter of the 28th, believe can fill in the gaps. If you will look in the upper left-hand corner on the back of the picture you will see the date in pencil (2-28-63 Cerritos, Calif.). I forgot to mention it but that was the date the picture was taken by 'Red' Phipps using John Durkin's camera. I caught Red just home from the hospital. He is doing fine and says he came to work on July 3, 1953, while the station was still at the original location of 'Paramount' nee 'Clearwater'. He was promoted to station manager Aug. 1, 1976.

H. D. Watson was manager from 1922 to 1930, when he resigned to take a higher paying job as sound recorder at M-G-M Studio. I saw him start a steam schooner, while eating his lunch, tell the ship 'OK' and then turn around and type it out on the mill. Looked pretty impressive to a guy with ink still wet on his ticket but I now realize those were short messages and it was a well-known coaster so he really only had to remember the filing time and the four-figure group in the text - HI! I told that to Elmer Burgman many years ago and he said "Watson was probably trying to encourage me to go to his radio class at the Y.M.C.A."

Lindley Winser was station manager - and also drove to the harbor to repair bad transmitters and receivers - from 1933 until 1942. He was a naval lieutenant in the reserve and paid off with four stripes. He was a real smart man. He was aboard the Utah - radio controlled target ship and when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor he went over the side in skivvies with nothing saved but a ring. They sent him back as manager at WSL but he died of natural causes in just a few years. John Durkin retired about ten years ago - ahead of normal retirement - and has a string of race horses. Occasionally he wins a race but they aren't the class of horses who win anything big. I have never seen a race - not a matter of morals but they just don't interest me.

I almost forgot Stanley Noah who transferred here from Seattle. He was manager there and at KOK about a year, in say 1971. I was acting station manager for years when JFD was on VKN and they offered me the job when he retired but I turned it down as they had moved the receivers in with the transmitters and the chief must be responsible for all the repairs - including those water-cooled sets which needed a master plumber as much as a radio man. JFD was 35 years at KOK and 30 as station manager. Dalt wrote me that John 'is probably the greatest radio operator in the world as well as a fine technical man - a rare combination'. Quite a tribute from the west coast manager - now retired. Probably other stations would dispute but he certainly was good at both. I was quoting Dalton Bergstedt.

In the picture - left to right - Herman Friend 'HF', George Dery 'DY', John F. Durkin 'J', Gerald McAlea 'GM', Paul Koenig 'PK'. Red Phipps took the picture but that was the entire staff and it was taken after KOK moved to Cerritos.

We did a couple of things to enable one man to handle a large amount of traffic. For one thing JFD made up some crystal controlled converters. With split phones he could guard 3, 12 and 16 megs with one ear and 500 KC with the other. Also we had teletype rolls with a carbon copy and all were able to copy direct on the printer, lagging back a bit to put in 'Los Angeles Radio via MacKay' in the preamble. Then just tear off, staple the copies and throw 'em in the file. No recopying of messages copied on a 'mill'.

Scanned your letter and 'bv' I've touched all the bases.

73

s/George Dery



Taken Feb. 28 1963 - Cerritos, CA. In Oct. 1980 the three at left were retired and two at right still working at KOK. Picture from collection of George P. Dery W6BG [457-P].

A Tribute to the Pioneers

Early seagoing wireless operators experienced something perhaps never before felt by human beings: they had a handle on the whole world. In the middle of a vast ocean the wireless operator could communicate with other operators thousands of miles away at will. It almost amounted to a mystical experience.

Something else: those pioneering Sparks' were probably always very young men who practically overnight were propelled from delivering newspapers on a bicycle (or the like) into carrying the news by Morse code to mariners far out at sea, the first time in history that such an amazing feat could be recorded; and that was only a minor part of their duties. They became unique and important members of the ship's company. That this position did not, on the whole, make their heads several sizes too large for their new resplendent uniform caps, is evidence enough of their self-possession, early maturity, courage and sense of responsibility even, at times, during periods of great stress as in the handling of distress calls and single-handedly repairing equipment damaged in foul weather. Most of them knew only too well that despite the importance of their duties they were cogs in a big machine of which all the rest of the crew including the skippers, the mates, the engineers and the sailors, to say nothing of the shore officials who ran the shipping line were integral and necessary parts.

They had to be young, those early pioneers, because most of their elders found it very hard to understand how the new miracle of wireless worked. It was something that required the kind of imagination only the young of that time were capable of. And look what it has grown into!

So let us old timers be proud of what we did and let it be recorded that we played a high dramatic part in the history of the twentieth century, else too soon we will be forgotten.....

---Fred Rosebury 1570-SGP

A Nautical Lay

(Apologies to Volstead.)

Where tides of traffic lap the shore
Of California Street
And rolling waves of carmine ink
Bespray the balance sheet,
The Underwriter dreams of risks
And rates that are no more—
He tightens up his shaky lines
And hears the brokers roar.

He minds the days when deals were
made
And sealed across the foam,
And derelicts, their decks awash
Were towed in safety home.
He cries, "Alack—The trade is slack
Out where the schooners ply—
How can our line be maritime
When all the bars are dry?"

"ATTENTION PLEASE... OWNER OF 1970
FORD WITH LICENSE WIRLESS 7071...
YOUR LIGHTS ARE ON IN PIER PARKING
LOT!"



Coffee Break

In the winter of 1953 I was an apprentice radioman aboard the USS WILLIAM C. LAWE (DO763), having just graduated from the San Diego radio school. We were sailing out of Newport, RI and had been steaming into the rough North Atlantic bound for Gibraltar.

Trying hard to impress the chief radioman, an old pain in the pants by the name of Hamilton ("Ham"), I shined brass, buffed woodwork and copied NSS FOX broadcasts. The chief told me to make a pot of coffee for the midwatch, which was coming on in about 20 minutes. Going below for water and not knowing how to obtain the large quantity I needed, I asked a wise old seaman, who pointed to a sea strainer painted bright red. I pulled the handle and filled the pot to the brim with water. Back in the radio shack soon enough the pot perked merrily - and did that coffee smell good!

Chief "Ham" said "I'm gonna try your coffee, and it better be good!" One big slug of it and Ham turned green and spat it out forthwith.

I never did live that one down: I was made a head-cleaner for two full weeks!

P.S. I did eventually learn how to draw fresh water aboard ship.

73s -RMC R.M. Robert "Bob" Robinson
3320-M; USN Ret.



Charles McCabe Himself

A Freak of Seamanship

Aboard SS Santa Ma
En route Cartagena

IT IS A TALE that most men who sail know about; but it was new to me and perhaps it is to you. I learned about it on the bridge the other night reading the account by John Euler in "Ships and the Sea."

The date was Dec. 30, 1899. Captain John D. S. Phillips had just got the news. The navigator had just finished working out a star fix and brought Captain Phillips the results.



His ship the Warrimoo's position was spotted at about latitude 0 degrees 30 minutes north and longitude 179 degrees 30 minutes west.

His ship was half-way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on her way from Vancouver to Australia.

First Mate Daydon broke in, "Captain, do you know what this means? We're only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line."

Captain Phillips knew exactly what it meant, and he was prankish enough to take full advantage of the opportunity for achieving the navigation freak of a lifetime.

IN AN ORDINARY crossing of the date line it is confusing enough for passengers because they lose a day, but the possibilities he had before him were sure to confound them for the rest of their lives.

The captain immediately called four more navigators to the bridge to check and double check the ship's position every few minutes.

He changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he carefully adjusted engine speed so he would strike it at just the right moment.

The calm weather, the clear night and eager cooperation of his entire crew worked successfully in his favor.

At precisely midnight, local time, the Warrimoo lay exactly on the Equator at exactly the point where it crosses the International Date Line.

The consequences of this bizarre position were many.

THE FORWARD PART of the ship was in the southern hemisphere and in the middle of summer.

The stern was in the northern hemisphere and in the middle of winter.

The date in the aft part of the ship was Dec. 30, 1899.

Forward, it was Jan. 1, 1900.

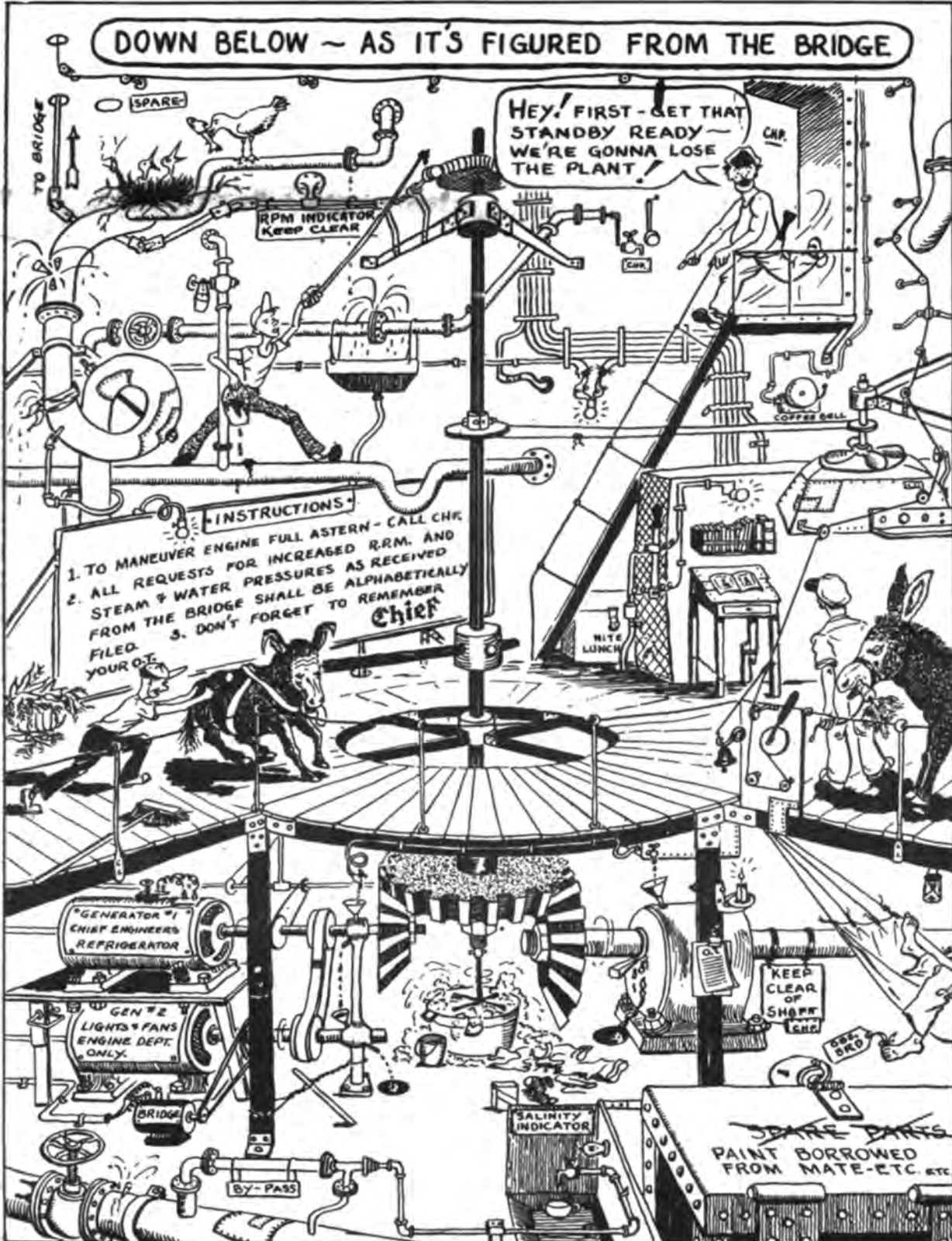
The ship was therefore not only in two different days, two different months, two different seasons and two different years, but in two different centuries - all at the same time.

MOREOVER, THE PASSENGERS were cheated out of a New Year's Eve celebration, and one entire day.

Dec. 31, 1899 disappeared from their lives for all time.

There were compensations, however, for the people aboard the Warrimoo were undoubtedly the first to greet the new century.

And Captain Phillips, speaking of the event many years later, said, "I never heard of it happening before, and I guess it won't happen again until the year 2000!"



By A. E. Merrikin, courtesy The Range Light, a publication of the Texas Company, Marine Department.



Reprinted by permission - Charles McCabe and the San Francisco Chronicle, June 30 1982.

"TOP HONOR"**SHIPS NAMED FOR RADIO-MEN****"ABOVE & BEYOND"****THE FAMOUS BULL DOG OF THE NAVY**

U. S. B. S. Oregon on her trials in San Francisco Bay July, 1896. The first battleship built on the Pacific Coast, her record established western shipbuilding ability.

Ships Named in Honor of Radiomen

NAME OF SHIP U.S.S.	IN HONOR OF RADIOMAN
BUNCH (APR-79 ex-DE-694)	Kenneth Cecil BUNCH, ARM1. KIA 6 Jun 1942 during Battle of Midway; in VS-8
CHARLES AUSBURN (DD-294)	CHARLES AUSBURNE, EMT (R). Posthumous Navy Cross for manning the emergency wireless station in the Army transport ANTILLES 17 Oct 1917. (Family spelling for first ship; his spelling for second.)
CHARLES AUSBURNE (DD-570)	
DENNIS (DE-405)	Otis Lee DENNIS, RM3. Posthumous citation for conduct as aerial gunner on Kwajalein 1 Feb 1942.
FINNEGAN (DE-307)	William Michael FINNEGAN, Ens., ex-CRE. On OKLAHOMA 7 Dec 1941.
HOLLISTER (DD-788)	Lyle Eugene HOLLISTER, RM2. MIA from PLUNKETT, while engaged with enemy aircraft, at Anzio Sep 1943.
KEITH (DE-241)	Ellis Judson KEITH, Sea2, radioman gunner. KIA on patrol plane over Kiska Harbor 11 Jun 1942.
PAUL G. BAKER (DE-642)	Paul Gerald BAKER, Ltjg, ex-ACRM. MIA from VF-2 on 7 May 1942 during Battle of the Coral Sea. Posthumous award of the Navy Cross.
PETTIT (DE-253)	Robert Lee PETTIT, RM1. Died in his attacking PBY at Jolo Harbor 27 Dec 1941. Received the Navy Cross.
* REEVES (APD-52, ex-DE-156)	Thomas James REEVES, CRM. Awarded Medal of Honor for his distinguished conduct on CALIFORNIA 7 Dec 1941 until overcome by smoke & fire, which resulted in his death.
*RAY K. EDWARDS (DE-237)	Ray Keith EDWARDS, Corporal, USMC. Died during aerial bombardment on Guadalcanal while receiving an important radio message.
ROBERT BRAZIER (DE-345)	Robert Boyd BRAZIER, ARM2. Posthumous DFC for his actions during the Battle of Midway on VT-3 on 4 Jun 1942.

ROBERT K.
HUNTINGTON
(DE-781)

Robert Kingsbury HUNTINGTON, ARM3. One of 29 from VT-8 who gave their lives 4 Jun 1942 in the Battle of Midway.

SCROGGINS (DE-799) Ted H. SCROGGINS, ARM2. Awarded the Air Medal for his devotion to duty during bombing attacks on Japanese ships in Kiska Harbor. Lost 15 Jun 1942 on a patrol.

WILLIAM C. MILLER William Cicero MILLER, RM1. Killed at Pearl Harbor 7 Dec 1941; in VS-6 from ENTERPRISE.

In Honor of Other Communicators

CURRIER (DE-700) Roger Noon CURRIER, Lieut. Staff Communications Officer in ATLANTA off Guadalcanal 13 Nov 1942.

HOOPER (DE-1026) Stanford Caldwell HOOPER, RAdm. (Ret.). Radio specialist.

PARSONS (DD-949) William Sterling PARSONS, RAdm. (Ret.). Helped develop the radio proximity fuse. Was Bomb Commander over Hiroshima 6 Aug 1945.

WALTER X. YOUNG Walter Xavier YOUNG, 1st Lt., USMC. Schooled at Fort Monmouth, N.J. KIA 7 Aug 1942 on Gavutu.

WESSON (DE-184) Morgan WESSON, Ltjg. Schooled in communications at USNA in 1941. KIA on ATLANTA 13 Nov 1942.

Compiled for the Old Timer Communicators archives. Baker was in Radio Materiel School Class 30. Known personally by many OTC members, Hooper was a 1905 Naval Academy graduate.

(Furnished by John W. Trott, Sec. O.T.C. of S. CA.)

The Heritage of Radiomen is a Proud One !

There have been many recorded instances, both in war and peace, where radiomen — 'stuck to their keys' as the ship under them was floundering or sinking in stormy seas. There are many times where men, in and out of military service, eschewed the opportunity of leaving their ships in the last lifecraft, to make the supreme effort of contacting and furnishing a potential savior with required details so they might effect rescue. The men in small boats pinned their last hopes on "Sparks". A prayer was on the lips and in the hearts of these men being tossed around on an angry ocean — that Sparks would 'come through'. He often paid with his life but he did not fail them.

The United States Navy, to its credit, has recognized these heroic deeds and as a posthumous award, named new ships of the line in their honor. The men, so honored with namesake ships, have been researched and compiled for the "Old Timer Communicator" archives and furnished by Secretary John W. Trott of the OTC of Southern California to the Society for publication.

We sincerely thank Mr. Trott and OTC for the privilege of publishing this proud bit of memorabilia which is a tribute to the name and memory of many wireless men for their valient and heroic action. It continues a proud tradition of the sea and adds to the heritage of our craft and profession.

William A. Breniman — Editor.



"SAG" - GOTEBOG SWEDEN CALLING

AMVER's Communications Link

By Hakan Svard
Goteborg Radio

Goteborg Radio/SAG, one of the oldest coast radio stations in the world, was established in 1905 in Gothenburg, Sweden, when the Swedish Navy began experimenting with radio communications between ships and shore.

In 1911 the Swedish Telecommunications Administration took over operation of the station and opened it for public correspondence. The first short-wave transmitter was installed in 1925. The wavelength was 37 meters and the output only 40 watts. In 1930 the station moved to Kungsbacka, about 18 miles south of Gothenburg, where more space was available to the rapidly growing station. In 1936 the first radiotelephone equipment was installed.

Finally, in 1948 Goteborg Radio moved to its present control and receiving center on the west coast of the Onsala Peninsula only a few hundred yards from the seashore.

The high-frequency (HF) telegraphy transmitters are located in Vallda, about four miles north of the station. The HF telephony transmitters are in Grimeton, 25 miles south of the station.

Over the last six years the station has been completely rebuilt and modernized. The staff of 75, including radio operators, technicians and officer personnel, works with the most modern equipment available.

HF Traffic

The HF operators keep a round-the-clock watch on the telegraphy calling channels by means of an automatic scanning device searching the channels. During the day two operators handle the HF telegraphy traffic, each monitoring two bands. At night only one operator keeps watch on HF telegraphy as well as two HF telephony channels.

The HF telephony keeps two operators busy all day long. They monitor eight channels and connect calls all over the world. If the increase in HF telephony calls continues three operators will be assigned full-time.

The station's HF antennas are directional, and once a vessel's position is learned the station can arrange optimum communications.

The handling of traffic at SAG has been made much easier by INFOSAG, a new traffic handling and display system for coast stations. It lists all the particulars of messages and radiotelephone calls on the traffic list. As a result the station can maintain an up-to-date traffic list for its customers.

Maritex

About half the AMVER messages passed through Goteborg Radio are sent via HF telegraphy. The others are received by Maritex, an automatic radio telex system for ships. Via the international telex network messages are fed into the Maritex computer at the station. The computer then selects the best frequency and antenna and transmits the message to the ship. Telex messages from ships are forwarded to the subscriber in a minimum amount of time. At present, about 240 Swedish and foreign ships use Maritex.

The over-all traffic volume at SAG is steadily increasing despite the decrease in the number of Swedish merchant vessels. Ten years ago 95 percent of all traffic concerned Swedish ships. Today about 70 percent of SAG's customers are registered under foreign flags, although most Maritex customers are Swedish.

The telegram volume on HF has slowly declined, partly because of the Maritex system which handles about 400,000 messages a year. This total is increasing at about 20 percent annually. HF telephone calls, on the other hand, have doubled in the last five years.

Like most coast stations, Goteborg

Radio keeps watch on 500 kHz, 2182 kHz and VHF channel 16. Ship traffic is heavy along the Swedish west coast so SAG's working channels on VHF are busy all day. For ships out of VHF range there are also two MF channels.

Rescue Coordination Center

Goteborg Radio is the rescue coordination center for search and rescue operations along the Swedish west coast. All radio officers engaged in this work have received special training. Recently, computerized search planning has been introduced. This system is based on that developed for the U.S. Coast Guard but has been modified to suit Swedish conditions. In 1982 SAG handled more than 800 sea rescue operations. These ranged from overdue small craft to emergencies involving large merchant ships. The station also handles radio medical advice.

Operators at SAG fall into two categories. The largest group is those having first class radiotelegraphy certificates. All of them have worked at sea for at least three years. They rotate between all operating positions. This routine is popular with the watchstanders.

These operators work a nine-day watch schedule. They are on duty for two mornings, two evenings and one night watch for a total of 34 hours.

The other operators at the station have radiotelephone certificates, second class radiotelegraphy certificates or both. They also alternate between different positions but never stand watch on HF telephony/telegraphy, MF telegraphy or in the Sea Rescue Center. They are on duty for 38 hours a week divided equally between morning and evening watches.

SAG's station building is beautifully situated in a meadow surrounded by woods on three sides. The fourth side offers a splendid view of the sea. Elks or deer are often seen grazing peacefully at the edge of the woods early in the morning. During the summer the beach is crowded with people enjoying the sand and sun. SAG's operators often slip down to the beach between watches.

An AMVER pennant is displayed on the wall of the station's recreation room.

According to Leif Henriksson, station manager, "Today with plenty of space and new modern equipment, it's a pleasure to be manager of Goteborg Radio. Since 1911 when Goteborg Radio started we have never closed down and we certainly will continue this tradition for a long time yet."



A watchstander monitors the emergency frequencies.



Erlend Jacobsson, a veteran of 37 years at SAG, works a ship transmitting via HF telegraphy.



Reprinted from AMVER BULLETIN - 3/1982 [U.S. Coast Guard]



Nantucket

YESTERDAY'S ISLAND



Yesterday's Island

First Wireless Communication

The role played by the Siasconset Wireless Station has never been properly evaluated. When the *New York Herald* and Guglielmo Marconi selected this place for the first commercial wireless station in America, it was basically a matter of geography. But history was made almost immediately.

Not only was the first message from a ship at sea recorded, but when the first use of wireless in saving lives of those aboard ships occurred, it brought about the famous Congressional Act of 1910—the compulsory ship wireless bill. This unprecedented maritime legislation provided that all vessels carrying more than 50 passengers and crew and plying on routes more than 200 miles long must be equipped with a wireless telegraph.

There were two wireless stations in the area of 'Sconset. The first station was striking in its lonely beauty; screened from the ocean bluff by the little village, the place was nearly half a mile from the beach. To the northeast the lighthouse at Sankaty sent out its shafts of brilliant light. To the west sloped the pasture land towards Plainfield, with Bloomingdale Farm and the old 'Sconset golf course in view, with Levi Coffin's farm just beyond.

The very pattern of linking people over vast distances was mystery itself.

How many could have envisioned that one of those young, mysterious operators would one day become the head of one of the most powerful communications organizations in the world—R.C.A.? Surely there is a moral to the story of that industrious young operator at his key. Contained in those lonely hours of his night vigils was an American dream. Then he was the solitary link in a chain connecting an ocean liner far at sea with the metropolitan centers of a continent. He went on to participate in other adventures, eventually to become a key figure in the creation of a communications empire.

Other young operators became Island residents, their careers a part of family life on Nantucket. Thus, the story of wireless on Nantucket left its impress not only in scientific achievement but in the equally important quality of the humanities.

The invention of wireless telegraphy added an invaluable safeguard to mariners.

It was in the summer of 1901 that the 'Sconset wireless station was established on Nantucket Island as a joint enterprise of Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of the new method of communication called wireless telegraphy, and the *New York Herald*. A high wooden mast, with topmast 185 feet high, made its location quite conspicuous with its tiny one-story operator's house beneath it.

The station itself was a place of mystery. Glimpses

of an operator seated at this telegrapher's key, with ear-phones clamped to his head was something of a symbol of this new magical world of communication.

The *New York Herald* had obtained permission also to install wireless receiving and transmitting apparatus aboard the Nantucket Shoals Lightship 40 miles south of Nantucket. On August 12, 1901, communication between the lightship and the 'Sconset headquarters was established.

Four days later on Friday, August 16, the Cunard liner *Lucania*, about fifty miles east of the Nantucket lightship, sent out the historic message, "All well on board. We are 237 miles from Sandy Hook . . . expect to reach New York Harbor Saturday." The lightship operator immediately transmitted the message in Morse code through the air to the 'Sconset station. The message was then telephoned via cable and in 30 minutes the *New York Herald's* office had the story.

A new era in communications had been launched at Nantucket, where the first permanent wireless station in America had thus been established.

Four years later it proved to be the salvation of all on board the South Shoals Lightship, when the vessel sprang a leak and was in danger of foundering at her anchors. The call was sent out over the water, and the U.S. steamer *Azalea* was rushed to their assistance, arriving in the nick of time.

The sinking vessel was taken in tow, but ere half the distance to shore had been covered, she plunged beneath the waves and disappeared. Her crew barely escaped with their lives.

Again in January 1909, when two ocean liners collided in a dense fog sixty miles off Nantucket, and the palatial steamship *Republic* with a thousand passengers aboard was being engulfed, the wireless station at 'Sconset picked up the call for help and flashed the message hundreds of miles to in-coming steamers at sea and naval stations on land.

Within a few hours of the disaster, eight tugs and ocean steamers were rushing to the scene from all directions and everyone was saved. The *Republic* sank midway to shore, while the *Florida*, the other vessel involved in the collision, badly stoven, succeeded in reaching port under convoy.

In June 1910, Congress passed the compulsory wireless bill, which made it mandatory for "all vessels carrying more than 50 passengers and crew and plying on the routes of 200 miles or more must be equipped with wireless telegraph."

The bill added a marked increase of work for the operators at 'Sconset because of its position where it was in touch with nearly all outgoing and incoming U.S. steamships.

Member Barney Zweig - 3236-P who lives in East Dennis, MA up on Cape Cod sent us a delightful little newspaper published in the historic nautical setting of Nantucket Island (Mass.) It was, as many know, home-port for many whaling ships of the early days. While the fleet of ships has long gone much of the nautical flavor, lore and legends of those days can be found at most every turn.

Jutting well out into the Atlantic, the island was an excellent spot for a wireless station to handle traffic with ships bound to and from New York and Europe. "Old SC" as it was called, built at Siasconset, became legendary. Among the thousands of emergency calls it handled, most remembered is that of the CQD sent by Jack Binns of the SS *REPUBLIC/MKC* back on Jan. 23 1909. Jack Irwin was the operator on the 'graveyard trick' who received Binn's call and alerted all traffic on the Atlantic. Some 1650 lives were saved from the sinking *Republic* and *Florida*. Jack Binns became an 'instant' hero and the world became aware that wireless was something more than a plaything!

"YESTERDAY'S ISLAND", the unique paper published by Dick Daub brings a wealth of historical news dating back into the 18th century. While it is slanted to the thousands of tourists who flock to Nantucket every summer, it is full of marine lore that makes it a pleasure to read. Suggest sending Dick a buck for a copy and be sure it will be worth it. His QTH: PO Box 626, Nantucket, MA 02554. Thanks to the Daubs for permission to republish this story which appeared in Vol. 11 No. 9 of "Yesterday's Island"

Dean of Wireless Historians



HENRY W. DICKOW

HENRY W. "DICK" DICKOW

Many "Old-Timers" will remember Mr. Dickow as an Editor and Publisher in the Wireless and Amateur Radio field, second only to Hugo Gernsback. "Pacific Radio News" which later became "Radio" enjoyed world-wide circulation circa 1917 to 1930. "Dick" enjoyed a very eventful, busy, rewarding life. His last "Project" the publishing of a 5-volume series "TALES OF THE WIRELESS PIONEERS" was donated to Bill Brenina when Dick became a Silent Key April 17 1971..

Remember the "Levi" ?









Its name was originally the SS *VATERLAND*, a great German floating palace. When World War One broke out in Europe, she had the ill luck to be in New York and was interned as the ship of a belligerent. Consequently, when the United States entered the War, the ship was seized as enemy property: it was renamed the USS *LEVIATHAN* and used as a troop transport. But before such use, the German crew, in leaving, perpetrated some very ingenious sabotage. According to Mr. Horace A. Mayer who was signed on by the U.S. Army as an assistant engineer ("charge d'affaires fires," he called himself), one of the tricks went something like this:

Down below in the great profusion of small piping—steam, hot and cold water, electricity, telephones, etc—the Germans carefully pulled out many individual lengths of pipe, substituting for them lengths of solid round stock of the same diameter and painting it in a color-scheme to match the rest. . . You can imagine what the result of all this was. Engineer Mayer told me it took American shore experts and the engine-room crew many weeks to straighten out the mess. Of course, some of it they didn't bother with. A troop transport doesn't need anywhere near so much in the way of showers and telephones in every room; in fact much beautiful woodwork partition material was torn out.

The picture shows the *LEVIATHAN* at an Army pier in Hoboken, New Jersey, shortly after a disastrous fire which destroyed the pier in 1922 and did some damage to the vessel. I believe the ship, a ghost of the proud *VATERLAND*, was scrapped not long after.

---Fred Rosebury (1570-SGP)

Ever wonder what the Statue of Liberty thinks about ?

<p>UNTIL JUST RECENTLY I GET <u>AWFULLY</u> TIRED STANDING HERE YEAR AFTER YEAR. MY ARM IS NEARLY KILLING ME.</p> 	<p>STILL - THIS LIFE HAS ITS COMPENSATIONS. I'LL BET I'VE FLIRTED WITH MORE SOLDIER BOYS THAN ANY OTHER WOMAN IN AMERICA</p> 	<p>- THEY ALWAYS WAVE TO ME AND SEEM GLAD TO SEE ME. THEY EVEN THROW KISSES AT ME BUT DARN IT I CAN'T RETURN 'EM - BECAUSE - WELL MY HANDS ARE FULL</p> 	<p>- AND THOSE AVIATORS! THEY ARE GETTING JUST AWFUL BOLD. I GAVE ONE A NASTY LOOK THE OTHER DAY. HE CAME A LITTLE TOO NEAR AND WAS TOO FRESH</p> 
<p>- WHAT ARE THE WOMEN WEARING THIS YEAR? DO YOU KNOW I NEVER YET HAVE FELT OUT OF STYLE! THANK GOODNESS I DON'T HAVE DRESS TO WORRY ABOUT.</p> 	<p>- LOTS OF PEOPLE COME TO SEE ME SO I NEVER GET LONESOME. AND I HAVE A WONDERFUL VIEW OF PRESIDENT WILSON WHEN HE GOES BACK AND FORTH. ISN'T HE THE REGULAR LITTLE GADA-BOU THO'?</p> 	<p>HERE COMES ANOTHER LOAD OF SOLDIERS. THEY STARTED SHOUTING AND SINGING TO ME MILES AND MILES OUT AT SEA. MANY A WOMAN WOULD HAVE HAD HER HEAD TURNED IF SO MANY FINE LOOKING FELLOWS MADE SUCH A FUSS OVER THEM.</p> 	<p>IT'S A GREAT LIFE!</p> 

BRIGGS 14



Vol. V At Sea, Saturday, April 26, 1919 No. 8

"HOMEWARD BOUND" from France with thousands of returning troops aboard, the USS. SIBONEY furnished one and all with a copy of the "Ocean Wireless News" published by the U.S.N. aboard this ship. Some 4000 copies of "The Siboney Signal" were printed each day and furnished to soldiers aboard as well as all crew members. It was a tireless job for the Radio Officers aboard who copied enough news to fill a 4-page 'news-sheet' with abbreviated news in fine print.

In addition to the news, some of the great Newspapers of New York and other ports furnished copy in the form of cartoons, etc. etc. to embellish to contents and give returning men a little 'touch' of the country they had gone overseas to fight for.

We republish here a cartoon from the pen of "Briggs" that appeared in Volume V on the Fifth return trip of the transport. Thought you might enjoy this 'flashback' in time of a cartoonist of world-renown in that era. Regretfully we do not know the names of the radio-operators on "NZM" ... perhaps some of our members were at the key ?

Society member William Turner - 3287-V of Clearwater, Fla. Ham call W2WV picked up the little volume at a 'flea market'. He sensed the historical interest of the little publication and sent it on to us for Society archives. We hope you enjoy the page. It personifies the work of hundreds of operators who furnished a real service to their fellowmen and shipmates during WW-1. The same can be said in retrospect of other wars during the last century.



Noah's Way

And the Lord said unto Noah: "Where is the ark which I have commanded thee to build?"

And Noah said unto the Lord: "Verily, I have had three carpenters off ill, the gopher-wood supplier hath let me down-yea, even the gopher wood hath been on order for nigh upon 12 months. What can I do, O Lord?"

And the Lord said unto Noah: "I want that ark finished even after seven days and seven nights."

And Noah said: "It will be so."

And it was not so. And the Lord said unto Noah: "What seemeth to be the trouble this time?"

And Noah said unto the Lord: "Mine subcontractor hath gone bankrupt. The pitch which Thou commandest me to put on the outside and inside of the ark hath not arrived. The plumber hath gone on strike. Shem, my son who helpeth me on the ark side of the business, hath formed a pop group with his brotir-

er Ham and Japheth. Lord, I am undone."

And the Lord grew angry and said: "And what about the animals, the male and female of every sort that I ordered to come unto thee to keep their seed alive upon the face of the earth?"

And Noah said: "They have delivered unto the wrong address but should arriveth on Friday."

And the Lord said: "How about the unicorns, and the fowls of the air by sevens?"

And Noah wrung his hands and wept, saying: "Lord, unicorns are a discontinued line; thou canst not get them for love or money. And fowls of the air are sold only in half-dozens."

Lord, Lord, Thou knowest how it is."

And the Lord in His wisdom said: "Noah, my son, I knowest. Why else dost thou think I have caused a flood to descend upon the earth?"



ESTEVAN POINT WIRELESS STATION - VAE



ANDREW L. GRAY, CIRCA 1912 AT STATION "VAE" ESTEVAN. NOTE COAL-OIL LAMP ON WALL (They had to conserve electricity in those days). The RECEIVER IS A MARCONI MULTIPLE TUNER WITH RANGE 300-3000 METERS. POWER SPARK TRANSMITTER 7.5 KW. MR. GRAY RETIRED AS DIVISIONAL SUPT. OF B.C. COASTAL STATIONS IN 1953 AFTER 45 YEARS SERVICE. HE BECAME A SILENT KEY IN 1974. PHOTO BY SON LAURENCE GRAY.

too stormy to keep the large antenna aloft. It was later moved to Bull Harbor (VAG) which is on a somewhat sheltered island at the northeastern tip of Vancouver Island. Pachena Point is not far from Bamfield which is accessible by road. Bamfield was the first eastern terminus of the transpacific undersea cable.

I am not sure of the date of the photograph of my father at the operating position at VAE but I believe it is about 1912. He married my mother in 1913 and moved to the station at Gonzales Hill in Victoria (VAK) in 1914. Afterwards he was never to be seen without a collar and tie, so I am sure this photo was taken before 1913. In 1914 all the stations came under the jurisdiction of the Navy, and all operators wore naval uniforms. As chief operator of the Gonzales Hill station, my father was a warrant officer; the name of the ship he was nominally assigned to was the HMCS RAINBOW. It is the practice in the British and Canadian navies to assign ship names to all shore station installations; I believe -but I am not sure- the name of the Esquimalt Shipyard was the "Rainbow."

The photo of the Estevan operating position shows how valuable electric power was in those days. Coal-oil or kerosene lamps were used for lighting at night. The engine generator was only started when a ship was to be contacted or a message to be relayed to Victoria or Vancouver to be put on the landline. The engines were gasoline driven and gasoline was brought in 5-gallon cans from Hesquiat, which was about five miles away. Even at Hesquiat there was no dock so ships had to be unloaded by small boats or barges. Gasoline was therefore far too expensive to use for lighting, cooking or pumping water. I suspect that even the lighthouse did not use electric power for the light which was rotated by gravity, using weights

My Father Andrew L. Gray—Pioneer Wirelessman

Story as Related to Fred Rosebury

by son 'Laurie' SOWP-3637-P

Several coastal wireless stations were built in North America in the 1905-1910 period. In those days there were few telegraph operators in the United States and Canada who could handle International Morse at 25 wpm because most operators had been trained in "railroad" or American Morse. There is a difference of eleven letters and all the numbers between the two codes. American Morse is less satisfactory for transmission under noisy conditions because of the spaced letters: for example the letter C is dot-dot-space-dot in telegraph Morse, while sending an I and then an E requires a slightly longer space between the second and third dots. Cable operators used International, but here the operators were much more adept in reading inked tape than in listening through noise.

For this reason many of the earlier operators were "imported" from Europe because it was much easier to train an operator to use the rather simple electrical equipment than to teach the new code.

My father, Andrew L. Gray, was one of these imported operators. He had worked in the Glasgow Post Office as a telegrapher from 1904 to about 1908. When he applied for a job in Canada he was assigned to Estevan Point on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia. He died in 1974.

Estevan Point is about halfway up Vancouver Island. The lighthouse at this location was generally the first landmark to be sighted by ships coming from the Orient and entering the Straits of San Juan de Fuca bound for Vancouver and Seattle. In those days it was felt that wireless stations should be located as closely as possible to the shipping lanes. Accessibility by land was not a consideration, so to this day Estevan is not reachable by road. I believe that in recent years VAE has moved to Tofino, about 35 miles south of Estevan. When, some years later, direction-finding was invented, another station was established on this rugged coast at Pachena Point (VAD) which was primarily to assist ships in finding the entrance to the Straits. Another station was located just off the northern tip of Vancouver Island at Triangle Island, but this site proved to be a little





"MAPLE LEAF WEST" VAE

hoisted up by hand every few hours. At the wireless operating position, the white pushbutton at the operator's left was to signal the mechanic to start the engine if a ship was heard.

In the photo the receiver is a Marconi Multiple Tuner similar to those described in Ch.17 of "Wireless Telegraphy" by Rupert Stanley (1914). The tuner probably ranged from 300 to 3000 meters; the detector would have been either a carborundum or galena crystal. Calling and distress frequency was - and still is - 600 m. or 500 kHz. I don't know if they bothered to change to a lower frequency for handling traffic. The spark transmitter was probably rated at 7.5 kW. I believe that a 25-kW spark transmitter was installed about 1920.

The send-receive switch is not easy to see in the photo but the handle can be seen between the two lower pieces of paper on the wall. Safety was not much of a consideration in those days; the transmitter high-voltage r.f. appeared on this switch so that the operator had to be careful to keep his hands away.

The box between the send-receive switch and the tuner holds the detector. The sensitivity of the carborundum detector could be improved by placing a small voltage (less than 4 v.) in series with the headphones and the detector. This voltage was adjusted for best sensitivity with a potentiometer.

During World War II, the only places in North America that were actually shelled by the Japanese were the Estevan Point lighthouse and wireless station and Port Stevens, which is just south of the Columbia River mouth near Seaside, Oregon. This took place in June, 1942. At that time my father was living at the Pt. Grey coast station (VAI) near Vancouver. The operator at VAE sent four words: "BEING SHELLLED - CLEARING OUT." The lighthouse and all other lights were turned off and all personnel retreated to the woods. Although the Japanese fired many shells, only a few windows were damaged. My father spent many hours that evening at the key sending "VAE de VAI" and wondering, of course, if they had all been killed or not. Fortunately, nobody was hurt at either Estevan or Port Stevens.

I arrived on the scene in 1915 and spent the first ten years of my life living at VAK in Victoria. I can well remember the arrival of the first vacuum-tube transmitter about 1922, and the derisive remarks made by the operators who felt that "King Spark" would never be replaced. This particular transmitter was only 500 watts; it did not sound as loud at the other end as the 7.5 kW spark. The broadband effect of the spark transmitter, however, was such that it could be heard in landline telephones as well as on b.c. receivers for at least a mile from the station which was essentially in the middle of Victoria. For this reason the use of the vacuum-tube transmitter soon became mandatory. Spark was finally outlawed for all services in 1935. VAK used a synchronous rotary spark gap. Every day at the watch change at 4 PM my father would take out the spark electrodes and file them down to the special shape he felt gave the most pleasing tone. If the electrodes were too blunt, the note, which was probably 480 Hz, would sound a bit rough. Later, the vacuum-tube transmitter used a similar wheel with brass contacts which interrupted the CW signal at about the same rate. In 1937, when I was an operator on the SS PRINCE GEORGE, it was necessary to polish the brass contacts on the wheel in the 100-watt transmitter to avoid roughness of the note. It was always necessary at that time to use a modulated transmission on 500 kHz.

When I went to work for the Canadian Marconi Co. in Montreal in 1938, one of my first assignments was in the transmitter development department, working on a 1-kW, 100-500 kHz transmitter. Three were ordered by the Canadian government, one of these to be installed at Estevan Point. The other two were installed at Halifax, N.S. (Camperdown VCS) and at Yarmouth, N.S. (VAU).

One of the specifications for these transmitters was that they had to be on the air from a cold start in five seconds. In 1938 there was still no

commercial power at Estevan Point; the engine generators were only started when traffic was to be handled. Although the engines could be started quickly, the mercury-vapor rectifiers in common use in those days required a 30-second warmup time to avoid flashbacks. If a ship was in serious trouble, 30 seconds could seem like a long time.

Our task was to design a fast warm-up transmitter. The output tubes were RCA type 833A; these easily warmed up in five seconds. For the rectifiers we used copper-oxide at first. We may have built the first transmitter that had some solid-state components. At that time the only available rectifiers were made in England. One shipment of rectifiers was received, and then the Germans managed to destroy the plant (in England). About that time the newer and somewhat more efficient selenium rectifiers became available from the International Telephone & Telegraph Co.

Mr. A. L. Gray eventually became the divisional superintendent of the British Columbia coastal stations. He retired in 1953 after 45 years of service with the Canadian Government.

The coastal stations which were in operation included the following:

- VAB Vancouver City (Merchant's Exchange Building)
- VAC Cape Lazo (East coast of Vancouver Island)
- VAD Pachena Pt. Direction finding station
- VAE Estevan Pt. (West coast of Vancouver Island)
- VAF Alert Bay (S. end of Queen Charlotte Strait)
- VAG Bull Harbor (N. end of Vancouver Island)
- VAH Queen Charlotte Isls. (Dead Tree Pt. near Tlell on Graham Island)
- VAI Pt. Grey (near Vancouver at entrance to Burrard Inlet)
- VAJ Prince Rupert (Digby Island)
- VAK Victoria (originally Gonzales Hill; later at Gordon Head)
- VAL Transmitting station on Lulu Island at mouth of Fraser River. (Transmitters controlled by VAB and VAI)

and the 1983 Models are Not Here Yet !

Dear Bill:

Not having sailed since the beginning of WW-II, I made a two months trip recently aboard the M/V T.W. NELSON (WDZC) and found the following which might be classified as "Things ain't what they used to be."

Radioroom: 2KW SSB, 1KW HF, 500W IF, 40W emergency, 4-HF/IF receivers, 25W VHF (115 VAC or 24V Batt.)
Wx Fax, Comsat Telephone or Teletype, a gyro repeater with degree and minute scales.

Ship: 4 radars (one batt. operated), a high pwr loudspeaker in place of old steam or air whistle and driven by ship's P.A. system capable of duplicating old superliner whistles. Closed circuit TV throughout, cassette TV.

Wheelhouse: 100W SSB, 2 VHF, 1 aeronautical transceiver, 1 CB, 4 handheld VHF Video screen displaying ship's pos'n within 100 ft or better at all times, (Sextants are never used) ADF, complete engine control, twin screw, propeller shafts turning at all times at constant speed, ship's movement controlled by changing prop pitch from bridge.

All this and more on a 2600 ton vessel.

Kindest Regards,
Emil Weber

'Mike Button CW'

On 16 May 1946 while flying from the island of St. Lucia to Trinidad in a Navy JRF-5 (Grumman Goose), call letters N-34077, we were completely disoriented and lost in a tropical storm, eventually landing in a cove in South America (turned out to be Venezuela), completely out of fuel. We had two transmitters aboard, a Navy GP-1 which required the generator on the stbd. engine for power and a small GF of the RU-GE combination. The CW xmtr (GP-1) was useless because of no fuel to run the engine, so I used the FG on the aircraft battery. Problem: this GF was not set up for CW and we were out of range for voice to Trinidad. So, I used it anyway, using the mike button as a key, made contact with the search plane and eventually they found us and brought us fuel. If not for CW, they might never have found us because they, and we, were quite surprised to find us in Venezuela!

DON MILLER, USN (Ret.)

SOWP 3784-P

SOS DE KDML (Tanker SS. S.C.T. DODD)

By

A.Keith Singer



August 30, 1980 marked the fiftieth anniversary of a tragic marine accident not far from San Francisco. A tanker and a passenger ship collided, with the latter sinking rapidly. This anniversary reminded me that I, as radio officer of the surviving ship had never written the SOS story of the incident. So, here it is after half a century, written solely from memory, inasmuch as I had not kept even one newspaper clipping. Perhaps you may find it suitable for some issue of the SPARKS JOURNAL. If so, you are welcome. The manuscript need not be returned.

Kindest regards to you and all other members of the staff who are doing much to keep alive the fellowship and traditions of many old Marconi men and women.

A late August evening in 1929 found the crew of the tanker SS S C T Dodd in good spirits. It was pleasant to be back on the Pacific side of the canal, leaving the possibilities of late summer hurricanes on the Atlantic and Caribbean side. The cargo of gasoline had been discharged in Baltimore about two weeks earlier, and the tanks had been well steamed and aired. The 8:00 PM position report read Balboa to Richmond, California, 750 miles SE of San Francisco. The only radio problem of the trip appeared while the position report was being transmitted. KSE (Los Angeles) had difficulty in copying the transmission, reporting "breaking signals". The signal strength would drop abruptly to zero or near zero at random within the code characters. Although communication was possible with considerable difficulty, signals from the Dodd would not have been satisfactory for obtaining bearing reports from coastal radio direction finding stations.

It appeared to be a simple problem to run down and correct a braking signal until I checked the panel meters. All of those, including the antenna RF ammeter showed normal readings without deflections, even when the signal breaks occurred. The converted P8 transmitter was quite simple, using a pair of UV-204A tubes in a self excited circuit. As I recall, it was the fundamental Hartley. A check of internal connections, insulators, resistors, condensers, tubes, etc. was not a difficult job. A check of the antenna, the lead-in insulators and external connections followed, still everything showed normal. Although many hours had been spent checking and rechecking no progress had been made in finding and correcting the problem. Gloom was beginning to settle over the radio cabin. The next 8:00 PM position report was transmitted again with much difficulty. KSE continued to report badly breaking signals. As I closed the transmission and cut the generator, the captain who had been taking his exercises on the boat deck back of the radio cabin, appeared at the door. "Sparks, were you using the transmitter just now?"

"Yes, sir, just sending the position report."

"Will you put a book on your key and step out here a minute?"

An intermittent arcing could be heard as I stepped through the door onto the deck. The captain pointed above to an intersection between two steel cables. There the arcing was visible in the approaching darkness. One cable was stretched horizontally between the foremast and aftermast, suspended by strain insulators about eighteen feet below the antenna. The second cable was attached near the top of the aftermast and ran at a 90 degree angle to a cable anchor just aft of the midship superstructure, where it was grounded to the hull. These two cables had worked too close together at the point of intersection so that current induced into the insulated horizontal cable from the antenna intermittently arced to the one which was grounded. "Sparks, do you think that this has anything to do with your transmitting problem?"

"Yes, sir, I think it has everything to do with it."

"OK, don't use the transmitter except for emergency, get a good night's sleep and be out here at 8:00 AM. I'll have someone up there on a bos'n's chair to take care of it." I turned in thankful that this freak problem had not occurred while we were carrying gasoline or while airing the tanks. Also I was thankful for an alert and helpful skipper. The bos'n's chair operation next morning ended the breaking signal problem.

At 10:00 P.M. that evening (August 29) we ran into fog north of Cape Conception. Several radio bearings were taken from the coastal direction finding stations during the evening. I turned in about midnight but remained awake. Whistle blasts from other ships in the vicinity could be heard frequently, while those from the Dodd continued at regular intervals. Some time later I jumped out of the bunk when whistle blasts from another nearby ship seemed louder than usual, and occurred at more frequent intervals. Suddenly the Dodd blew four blasts and began shaking as the propellers were thrown into reverse. Immediately following this the nearby ship answered with four blasts, apparently signaling that it also was going into reverse thrust.

I was on my feet, just finishing dressing when the impact came. It was not sharp enough to throw me off balance, but was more like a slow crunch. The general alarm sounded as I arrived in the radio cabin and turned on the receiver to 600 meters. Nothing unusual was heard so I stepped to the cabin door leading to the port side boat deck. A passenger ship was lying alongside with its bow toward our stern. The hulls of the two ships ranged from approximately five to ten feet apart, but the other ship's name on the bow was not visible from my position. There were only a few people on its deck. Suddenly this ship pulled away about thirty feet, its bow started rising while the stern was sinking rapidly. Within a few seconds the entire ship disappeared under the water. As I watched somewhat stunned the captain called, gave the necessary information for a distress message and ordered as SOS.

"SOS de KDML...SS S C T Dodd in collision with passenger ship believed to be SS San Juan...position 56 miles SW Pigeon Point Calif...Latter ship sank within three minutes after impact... damage to Dodd not yet known...request any nearby ship to stand by and to assist in picking up survivors...SOS de KDML...go ahead any nearby ship."

An immediate response from the SS Munami gave its position about twelve minutes distant and on the way, asking us to watch for its lights in this foggy area. This rapidly coordinated response which indicated that positive action already had been taken showed a high degree of professionalism by those involved on the SS Munami. A second response then was received. A Coast Guard Cutter, whose name I have forgotten, gave its position about 45 minutes distant and reported that it also was on its way to provide any additional assistance possible. Exchanges of information with the Munami followed relating to positions of life boats, etc. I then looked out again onto the port side boat deck and was momentarily startled to note

King Neptune Calls SS. San Juan



that our lifeboats were gone from the davits and our decks were deserted, except for the bridge. Then I remembered that our boats with their crews were busily engaged in rescuing survivors from the San Juan. Normal radio traffic was restored with break in possible by the Dodd, Munami and Coast Guard. This opened the door for message exchanges with the shore stations, primarily KPH. There was not only business traffic but quite a few messages from the wire services and press had been filed with the coastal stations. The radio shack again became quite active for a tanker.

Survivors from the San Juan soon began to appear on deck as our lifeboats returned with their wet and frightened cargo, then went back for more. Some of these survivors found their way to the radio cabin to file messages notifying relatives of their safety. Some of them had no money in their clothing so we figured out a way to pay for such messages. Among those who appeared in the radio cabin was Clifford Paulson, Chief Radio Officer of the San Juan. Cliff wanted to say hello and to file a message to his mother. He talked a few minutes then disappeared with one of our crew members to get rid of the oil and saltwater soaked blue uniform and replace it with something dry from our slop chest. What a pleasure it was to send that message for him!

The sun was well above the horizon when final notes were exchanged with the Munami and Coast Guard Cutter. The Dodd reported ready to resume its trip with no assistance. The Munami had picked up fourteen survivors and the Coast Guard five. It was estimated that approximately seventy passengers and crew members of the San Juan had been lost. The Dodd, with a gaping hole in the port bow then proceeded to San Francisco under its own power and with its unusual new cargo of twenty four survivors; twenty three men and one woman.

Built on Friendship to



Preserve our Heritage

Cdr. E. J. Quinby, USN (Ret.)

ENGINEERING, RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT
ORGANIZATION, IMPROVEMENT, OPERATION

30 BLACKBURN ROAD

SUMMIT, N. J. 07901

201 - 273-4293

May 1, 1980



Dear Bill (Breniman):

Aboard a venerable Four Piper,
Subj: WW-II Episode, off Key West.

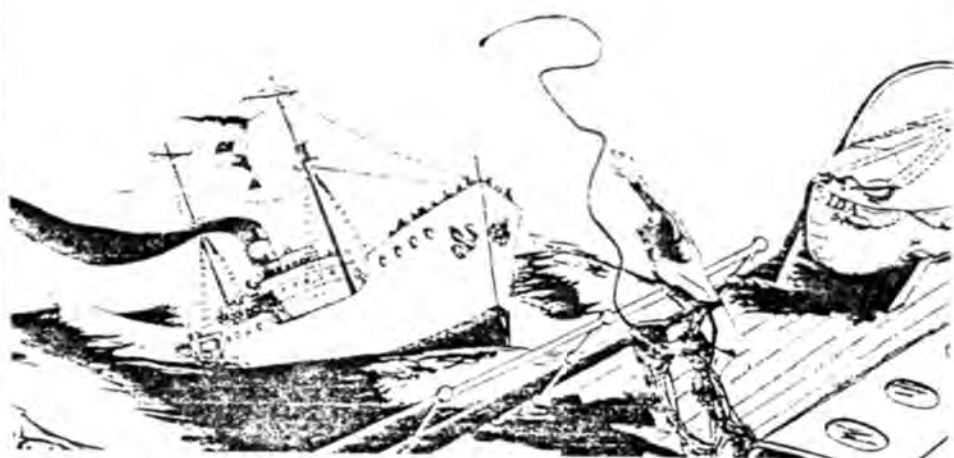
Once in a Blue Moon a rare poetic gem surfaces just in time to be rescued for posterity. Such was the case when the swift little gasoline yacht SNAFU met her doom, overtaken by one of the electronic warfare torpedo demons we were testing in the Gulf of Mexico. She just wasn't fast enough to evade this inert missile which penetrated her sensitive stern. SNAFU had been the private yacht of a patriotic Miamian who contributed her to the war effort. She was manned by a crew of six Sailormen who, true to Navy orders and tradition, hastily rescued the "ship's papers" as she settled to the bottom. Fortunately we were able to fish these courageous boys out of the Gulf Stream and restore their composure, - all hands including the important Radioman who dutifully turned over the classified papers to his superior officer, including the item titled SNAFU, safe from the prying eyes of enemy agents. I trust that this important document has long since been de-classified, so I offer it to the fellow members of SOWP who might enjoy trying their skill at decoding this mysterious document.

Surely all of us who have ever taken his chances out on the briny deep soberly or otherwise, will enjoy the subtle message concealed in this seagoing jargon. With it go the Author's humble apologies to the great Longfellow. And my sincere 73 to all hands.

Cordially yours,

E.J. Quinby

Encl: Item SNAFU.



A Good Signal



S O W P

THE "WIRELESS PIONEER"

The "SOCIETY OF WIRELESS PIONEERS, INC." is a non-profit, non-partisan and non-political organization of "PROFESSIONAL" wireless and radio operators (Active and retired) who have united for the purpose of recording history and memorabilia of the early days of this mode of communications which has had great impact on world civilization and development. Since many of our members were the pioneers in this new field of electronic communications, we feel the heritage and accomplishments of these early years should be recorded for posterity. The Society hopes through its books and publications to record and document the technical and operational history of an era rich in accomplishment. The "Historical Papers", "Tales of the Wireless Pioneers, record the contributions of members. These are bound in books and publications entitled, PORTS O'CALL, "SPARKS" and the "SPARKS - JOURNAL". The Directories and Call Books published are for the use and convenience of members only and are furnished without cost for their use.

Publication of our 'Historical' and "Technical" publications will be furnished to all sustaining members and in addition they will be mailed without cost to institutions requesting, such as National Archives and Libraries, Technical Institutions and entities of like nature in which memorabilia and historical data may be made available for reference without charge. The Society can take no responsibility for the validity or authenticity of material appearing in our publications, although we try to check all material used in a careful manner. Permission is granted for reprinting of material in this publication provided credit is given the Society (with suitable byline). Contributions of any nature should be accompanied with S.A.S.E., if return is desired, including pictures and manuscripts. Address: P.O. Box 530, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95402 U.S.A. The Society extends an invitation to all "Professional brass pounders who qualify to join our world-wide organization.

William A. Breniman

SNAFU

Wid Hapologies Yet To Longfeller

Rescued from the dusty, moldy Naval Archives
- By -

Cdr. E. J. Quinby - USN (Ret). SOWP 402
Became Silent Key Nov. 8 1981

Published in "Scuttlebutt Scandals" circa
WW-2 (By Bozo in "Our Navy" and credited
to "The Islander" (Alameda USCG Train
ing Station Paper) Source unknown.

SPARKS JOURNAL



Just a honred yards de freighter,
Just three honred feet, no fodder,
Haddet for de wurship's gengway,
Comink tru de wodder queekly.
Gafe de Hodee tree long sheevers,
Gafe an exclamashun, "Phoocy!"
Hull adt wanze de halarm sounded
Wit de wheezle, wit de syren,
Deep ropes, hog line and de trmmat
Were pot ofer queek like lightning.

Beng, de freighter heet de wurship,
crompled opp de freighter's bolkheads.
Bot de wurship never faltered.
Senk de freighter in wan meenit,
Gafe a laff, "Ha ha!" de helmsman,
Hulso asked, "Ees dees a seestem?"

From de Flegship's bridge de Hedmril
Saw de Haxident in poisson,
Saw de wurship heet de freighter,
Saw de freighter heet de wurship,
Saw de two sheeps heet each odder.
Gafe a cry like dees, de Hedmril:
"Where eet ees my staff ees hidink?"
Said de Hodee, "Bonkseuzual."

"Send a seegnal, send a message,
Send a deespatch, send a big won;
By de radio, by de weesual,
By de weeg-wag, wit de henflags".
Staggered opp de fleg Lieutenant,
Send de seegnal as deracted,
From de flegsheep to de wursheep,
From de Hedmril to de Keptin,
Send de seegnal as requested.

Come de seegnal from de flegsheep,
"Hoist eet upp your hensign promptly,
Giff won hesplanashun queekly,
Why ees not de boys adt quodders,
Why ees dat guy in de wutch kep
Scrubbing where de crew was mustered?
Why?-I esk you; henswer queekly."

Tru de wodder went de wurship,
Tru de moonlight in de efening,
Tru de moonlight and de wodder,
Hulso here wit dere a starlight;
Efferting was werry tranquil.
Came de dawn in early mornink
AS ees frequent hon de hoshun
Hulso sometimes in de moofies.

All ad wanze in consternashun
Gafe a cry, "Sell Hoi!" de lookout.
"Whereaway?" de Hodee asks heem,
"Can you mek her outd?" he added.
"Two points huff upon de port beam;
She's wan huffle damn beeg freighter,
She ees headink for our focsle".
Gafe a leff, "Ha ha!" de helmsman.

Den de Hodee grebs a voice tube
Leadink to de Keptin's steroom
Han hexplains de seetzuashun.
"Starboard rodder!" yells de Keptin.
"Hokey, ees by me agribble,
Bot de rodder does not henswer!"
Said de helmsman from de whilhez.

Wit a sigh de sturbud hengine
Stodded hup han huffle recket,
Hulso stopped de odder hengine;
Gafe a gasp de furward hair-Pump.
Wit a beng de furward firerum
Stopped eet hop de floskink seestem;
Lost de sockshun hull de hoil pomps,
Lost de prassure hull de boiners.
Gafe a laff, "Ha ha!" de helmsman.

Hempty now de tank from wodder,
Gone de wodder frum de showers,
Pumping now ees all de blekgeng.
'Till de tender sends clean laundry
Dere will be no boys adt quodders,
Dere will be no quoddermaster
Hoisting opp de hensign proudtly.
Why de guy ees in de wutch kep
Swabbing where de crew was mustered?
H'm, dun't esk," de Keptin told him.

Gafe a snarl, "Full spid de hingines!
Mek it sneppy!" swur de skeeper.
Adt dees mument rong de bozzer,
Asks de Chief a liddle pow-pow,
Wit de Keptin asks han hudience,
Spuk de Chief dese wurdz whut follow:
"Keptin, I am werry sorry,
Bot 'I hup you won't get worrit;
Mabbe we can feex de troble,
Mabbe eet ees not so turrible."



MY FIVE (5) SOS CALLS

By Wilfrid H. Brunton—3252-P

The attached pages comprise a list of the SOS signals sent during my service at sea. Also included is the account of my first occasion to send out a distress message. This was from the arctic steam trawler "LORD RUNCIMAN", which was sunk in collision with another British trawler whilst fishing off Andanes (or Andanaes) in northern Norway. During the course of my seagoing career I had occasion to send out the SOS signal five times between 1937 and 1941.

The "LORD RUNCIMAN" episode was probably the least dangerous situation in my opinion and only significant because it was my "first". The worst ones were, in fact, the S.S. "GALLOIS" and S.S. "WESTPOOL". The latter ship might be of interest because it occurred whilst in a "convoy" which was not a convoy! Shipping loss in this incident was extremely high - 14 ships sunk and an armed merchant cruiser heavily damaged, out of a group of 22 vessels sailing between Canada and the United Kingdom. There was no antisubmarine escort of any kind. To the best of my knowledge the story of this particular action has never been published anywhere, although there is a brief note on it in the book "Chronology of the War at Sea". I have a detailed personal account of the earlier stages of the action contained in my saltwater stained diary, together with some amplification obtained from other sources shortly after the event. I intend, if I ever have the time, to write up this one in book form as part of my WW2 experiences. If you are interested in having an extract, I would only be too willing to supply it.

Meanwhile, I look forward to receiving the SOWP publications, and am pleased to have become a member of the organization.

STORY OF THE S.T. LORD RUNCIMAN H165

Registered at Hull, Yorkshire, England
Call Letters - GYDW

Radio Equipment - Marconi 300 watt tube transmitter (A1, A2, A3), and Marconi Receiver and Direction Finder

I joined this vessel on August 20, 1936 and made several fishing voyages to the Barents Sea, Iceland and Norwegian coast. At that time it was one of the most modern of the Hull fishing fleet and was about 450 tons gross register. For those days, it was exceptional in that it had an all-welded hull (which proved to be unfortunate later). The vessel carried a crew of about 23 persons and on her last voyage I had two assistant operators both of whom were older than I! Accommodation for the radio staff on this ship was far superior to that provided on any ocean liner, while the equipment was better than on most large foreign-going ships of that time. Even the skipper, Bob Pettman, was unique for a fishing boat in that he worshipped cleanliness to an unusual degree. Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that he was known throughout the Arctic fishing grounds as "Icilma Bob". (For the younger generation "Icilma" was a very popular face cream used by many women!) It was said that he used this concoction regularly.

The ship was about 185 feet in length which is optimum for the short steep seas which run between England and the Russian Arctic legions. Its best speed was about 16 knots, but generally cruised at 11 knots to conserve coal supplies. An additional peculiarity about this ship was that unlike many English trawlers, I did not have to help with the fish gutting and cod-liver oil boiling. However, being a qualified navigator, I kept a bridge watch and relieved the skipper in "shooting" and hauling in the trawl gear. Voyages could last anything from 10 days to five weeks depending upon the zone of operation, fishing and weather conditions. Normally, we only had 24 hours in our home port except that once in three weeks or so we were allowed two days at home for what was called "settling". The purpose of this was for the owners to settle accounts for crews wages. Although I was officially employed by the Marconi Company from whom I received £3 per week, I also had a share in the ship's profits so that sometimes I might earn as much as £6 to £8 per week plus about £5 as my share of the codliver oil production. It was a very happy ship.

The unfortunate end of the "LORD RUNCIMAN" occurred on March 16, 1937. The weather was fine, the sea calm off Andanaes and the night was clear and starlit. We were fishing for cod and haddock and there must have been about 50 trawlers, English and German, fishing over a ten mile square area. The place looked like Coney Island because of the deck flood-lights and running lights of all the ships. The brilliant illuminations were to cause considerable confusion later.

I have no recollection of the time of night but we were pursuing a straight course, towing our trawl along the bottom, 200 fathoms below us when we observed a trawler commencing to haul in her nets not far from our port side. When hauling nets the trawler steams slowly round in a circular manoeuvre and this was what was happening. We realized that she was too close to us and that a collision might be expected. We altered course to starboard slowly because we did not want to overturn our trawl. In the event, the other ship (the Hull trawler "FILEY BAY") I think continued its circling course and bumped and scraped its hull along our port side. The collision was so gentle that we merely exchanged "no damage" reports and I went into the radio office to reassure the junior operators. Only a few moments later the skipper came in and requested the operators to standby for a possible SOS transmission, since we were taking in water fast. I was incredulous and went outside where I was shocked to see that we had a long split in our hull plating, right on the waterline. Not only that but I could see the split lengthening slowly just above the weld. It was as though an invisible can opener was cutting open the hull.

A couple of minutes later I was requested to send out the SOS signal, first on the fleet frequency; I followed this up with a distress message on the small craft distress frequency, using both MCW and telephony. In the north of Scotland our message was picked up Wiche Radio GKR and also by our home port radio GKZ on the Humber River. Naturally, our messages were picked up by most of the fishing fleet, but most of them could not pinpoint us, even by direction finder because of the crowded area. Finally, we solved the situation by flashing our decklights on and off. By this time only the engine room and after end of the ship were clear of water but the engine room bulkhead appeared to be under heavy pressure of water. The ship's foredeck was also now awash so the skipper decided to order "abandon ship", and the only lifeboat was swung over the side. Since the ship appeared ready to take the final plunge, we all got into the lifeboat and rowed it to a trawler standing close by. No one was hurt in the evacuation and we all stood on the deck of the rescue ship, the name of which I cannot remember, waiting for the LORD RUNCIMAN to take its final plunge. However, after about five minutes the ship, lying with the foredeck awash, did not seem to be sinking any further so we decided to see if we could get her in tow. Accordingly, the third hand and myself coiled as much steel towing as were possible into our lifeboat which was still alongside the rescue ship, and rowed towards the LORD RUNCIMAN. It took us about ten minutes to get the bight of the tow wire onto the fore-castle head bits, where upon we took stock of the situation. The engine room bulkhead was bulging inwards, but there was only a foot or so of water on the plating so we signalled the tow to commence. The third hand took the steering wheel while I watched the engine room from the top grating. I think that we were under tow for about 15 minutes, heading towards the Norwegian coast, only a few miles away, when there was a loud crack from the strained bulkhead, followed by an inrush of water into the engine room. At this point the ship began to settle fairly rapidly so the third hand and myself "walked" over the side into our lifeboat and rowed away as fast as we could. We had a grandstand view of the sinking and noticed that our mast head lights remained on, though somewhat dim, until the entire hull disappeared below the surface. With that, we climbed aboard the rescue ship where we spent several days helping the crew to complete their catch. Five days later we were land in our home port of Hull.

IT NEARLY BECAME A HABIT

1. Steam trawler LORD RUNCIMAN - GYDW
Port of Registry - Hull, Yorks, England
Date Sent: 16 March 1937, sank same date
Place Sunk: Off Andanaes, Northern Norway
2. M/V QUEEN ADELAIDE - G2CL
Gross Tonnage 4993
Registered: Glasgow
Date Sent: Exact date will be furnished later
Place: Off Vancouver Island, B.C., Canada
3. S.S. SIMONBURN
Port of Registry: Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, England
Date Sent: 30 October 1940, sank same date
Place Sunk: NE coast of Scotland
4. S.S. WESTPOOL
Ex US ship (looked like a WW1 hog-island ship)
R/O's: H.W. Brunton, Chief
Mr. Shaw, 2nd
Mr. Thornton, 3rd
Date Sent: 3 April 1941, sank same date
Place Sunk: 6-700 miles NW of Bloody Foreland
5. S.S. GALLOIS
Gross Tonnage: 2684
Date Sent: 15 June 1941
Place Sunk: In shallow water, Southshields, England.
Later raised and repaired.
6. S.S. GALLOIS
Date Sent: 6 August 1941
Place Sunk: Haisbro Sandbank, East Coast, England

Wireless Pioneer Days in South America

Republished
from
1914 'Wireless Age'



The interest which envelops wireless telegraphy and the men engaged in it has been heightened by the accounts of the progress of the art in South America--the land of romance and revolutions--where marconigrams are used as a means of communication over long distances both on land and sea. One station was built over the burial place of mummies hundreds of years old; another stands in a desert of white sand at a considerable distance from human habitation, while a third is on the summit of a peak more than a thousand feet above the level of the sea. These are some of the not unremarkable features brought out in the recital of the introduction of wireless in the tropics.

Perhaps the most interesting discovery made in constructing the stations was that revealed to workmen while digging in preparation for laying the foundations of the towers at the little town of Arica, a seaport in northern Chile. The story goes that as the men broke up the dry soil the shovel of one of them struck something which at first he believed to be a rock. He dug a little further into the ground and obtained a glimpse of part of the obstruction. What he saw stirred his curiosity and he redoubled his efforts. Soon the other workmen noticed his excitement. They, too, set to work to unearth the object which had aroused their interest, and in a few minutes it was exposed to their wondering eyes. Their amazement was mingled with something akin to horror when they found that they had uncovered what proved to be a well preserved mummy. A further search revealed other mummies. Thus the site of a wireless station was established in a section that had been used by folk of the earlier ages for a mummy burial ground.

The traveler interested in wireless will profit by a visit to the port of Antofagasta further south. In a desert of white sand, far away from the town, stand the Antofagasta towers. The engineers doubtless had good reasons for choosing this site, but the operators who work in the stations see little of their fellow men and they speak of the "infinite distances" that must be traversed in order to reach the towers.

The tower of the wireless station at Lima, Peru, occupies a lofty elevation, being located atop of Cerro de San Cristobal, an imposing eminence overlooking the Rimac valley. Cerro de San Cristobal has an altitude of 1,386 feet above the level of the sea and is 919 feet above the city. The tower reaches a height of 348 feet above the point of the hill furthest skyward. The station was opened for wireless communication with Iquitos on the upper Amazon, 640 miles away, more than two years ago. The Lima station has a ten-kilowatt set and messages are exchanged without difficulty between the two points, although a mountain range 1,800 feet in height intervenes.

There is much interest in the announcement that Ecuador intends to build a wireless station on Galapagos Islands. These islands are a group of small volcanic islands in the Pacific ocean, about 600 miles from Ecuador. The group has an area of 2,400 square miles, the largest island being Albermarle. The work of constructing the station may not be without danger, for there are supposed to be several volcanoes that are more or less active on the islands. The group came to notice early in the sixteenth century, being visited frequently afterward by pirates. There is no record of stories of buried treasure, however.

Quito, where Ecuador also proposed to establish a wireless station, has the advantage of a high elevation, being situated on a plateau 9,300 feet above the sea. Quito has had for a long time the reputation of being a very dull and quiet city. Its trade has not been active, this condition being attributed to its inadequate means of communication

with the outside world. It is expected that the establishment of the station will better trade to a considerable extent.

Another place selected for the establishment of a wireless station by Ecuador is Esmeraldas, located at the south of the Esmeraldas river on the Pacific ocean. A commission has been appointed by Ecuador to investigate and consider propositions having to do with the proposed stations.

Bogota, where Colombia plans to erect a station, is, like Quito, located on a plateau. On all sides except one are high mountains. The city has labored under a great disadvantage because of its lack of communication facilities, despite the attempts of the government to remedy this condition by improving the roads and rivers. Medellin, which is the capital of the Department of Antioquia, and has grown up between the ranges of the central and western Cordilleras mountains, is to have a wireless station and one will also be erected at Buenaventura.

Particularly picturesque is the site of the station at Montevideo, Uruguay. A great hill which is on the west side of the bay and opposite the entrance to the city forms the tower. The hill is called Cerro and was sighted by Magellan on his voyage of discovery.

Discrimination between places and people are not recognized, it seems, where it is apparent that there is opportunity for the employment of wireless. This is illustrated by the fact that the insignificant native village of Ushalia, the capital of Tierra de Feugo, Argentina, on the Beagle channel, at the southern extremity of South America, has a station with a range of 275 miles. Thus by aid of marconigrams the little hamlet, whose inhabitants owe their knowledge of the English language to missionaries, is able to talk with passing ships or communicate with the more powerful station that is located on one of the hills near Punta Arenas on the shores of the straits of Magellan. Punta Arenas can communicate with Puerto Montt, the capital of the province of Llanquihue, Chile, or any other stations within its range of 2,000 miles. In fact, the wireless has made Ushalia and the southern points of South America neighbors of the various sections that have stations as far north as California and Alaska.

A new bond will soon be added to those joining the United States and the republics of South America when arrangements are completed to send wireless messages by way of Paraguay and Bolivia to Manaus, Brazil, and thence to Washington. Manaus, which is the capital of the state of Amazonas, is located on the Rio Negro, ten miles before the latter joins the Amazon. The city is in communication with Para, the capital of the state of Para, on the Para estuary, by cable. Although Manaus and Washington have 3,100 miles between them they have exchanged wireless messages, the signals being "read consistently," according to reports.

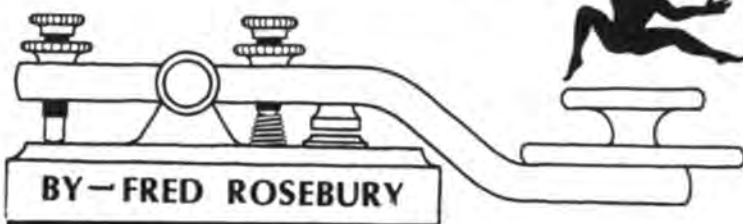
In Argentine there are today more than 120 stations, and plans have been formulated for the construction of 30 more in this interesting country which ranks next to Brazil in size among the South American republics and has many forests and woodlands.

Throughout Brazil are nearly 100 stations. Brazil is a neighbor of republics which have in a measure been educated up to the value of wireless and are looking forward eagerly to a better acquaintance with the art. Among these republics are Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay. Uruguay has twenty-four stations and Paraguay is erecting ten. Bolivia, which began the erection of seven stations two years ago, has formulated plans to extend her wireless system. The interest of this country in wireless was revealed in an article in *The Wireless Age* last June when tests of portable sets by the Marconi Company were described. Bolivia is an extremely high region, two parallel ranges of the Andes extending across the republic from northwest to southwest. With the aid of these mountains Bolivia should be able to obtain a vast range for her wireless.

In reviewing the facts and figures cited in this article regarding the status of wireless in South America today, it should be remembered that five years ago there were approximately only fifty stations on that continent. Which shows that the tropical countries are doing their utmost to keep pace with the wireless growth of their neighbor to the north--the United States.

Roaming The Globe

The Rustbucket Herald



FACT OR FANCY?

Was there ever really a "Ball-Bearing Telegraph Key?"

All of we Old Timers in the SOWP are familiar with the time-worn legend of the Champion Telegrapher named Paul Bunyan, who hung up the world's record for high-speed transmission of over a thousand words per minute, - or was it over a hundred wpm? There has always been a dispute over the placement of the decimal point. His famous BALL-BEARING TELEGRAPH KEY is said to have made his record possible after many years of effort during which Bunyan burned up one standard-type key after another just as he was approaching the desired goal. It was the introduction of ball bearings in the key trunnions that led to success and made Paul world famous.

Then, alas, that improvement led to his undoing, for just as he was about to break his own record at the International Contest in Glassboro, N.J., poor Paul developed a glass arm and had to admit defeat.

Thereafter, he turned his attention to a specially designed Vibroplex called the Bunyan Model, with an adjustable 32-ounce (453 grams) sliding weight on the vibrating pendulum which Paul slid right up to the end; but not being equipped with ball bearings, it smoked, smelled like a box car with a hot-box, and its temperature got so high that it froze up just as Paul was about to exceed his earlier record.

Although a few veterans claim actually to have seen a real ball-bearing telegraph key, it took Commander E. Jay Quinby (SSGP 402) to introduce one of these at the Pickerill Chapter meeting on April 9th, 1981. There, in Bahr's Bar, in the shadow of the historic Twin Lights lighthouse atop the Atlantic Highlands, this rare relic was passed around among the gathering of nearly a hundred members and guests who sat twelve to a table along eight long tables. Ignoring the magnificent view of Sandy Hook, they each tried their "fists" at this novel instrument.

Despite the concentrated efforts of this happy crowd of experts, the ball bearings in which the key lever was mounted withstood the test without even beginning to smoke or give off any stench of hot oil. Its temperature, measured at the termination of this rigid test, rose only two degrees fahrenheit above the ambient temperature of Bahr's waterfront resort.

Subsequently, as the gathering adjourned to hike up the bluffs to view the newly installed replica of Marconi's first Wireless Station in America, some of the diehard skeptics were heard to remark something about group mesmerizing and mass hypnotism. These gentry still maintained that there really never was such a thing as a ball-bearing telegraph key afloat or ashore - and certainly not at the Atlantic Highlands on this occasion.

Quinby was heard to claim that he had picked up this sample, still in mint condition, when he had visited a small suburban industrial complex in a Japanese village named Usa, between Tokio and Yokohama; this was reported in his book "Ida Was a Tramp." The products of this settlement were all stamped with the identification "MADE IN USA," which operated to avoid import duty on shipments arriving in the United States.



At this gathering of the SOWP it was announced that the rare sample key was to be donated to Dr. E. Stuart Davis's National Telegraph Museum, at 1149 Weber Street, Union, New Jersey, 07083, where it will join the most comprehensive collection of telegraph, cable and radiotelegraph equipment to be found anywhere. (Visitors may view this collection by appointment by telephoning 201-686-4932).

Skeptics are invited to try their skill on this mysterious late addition to the realm of radio, and the profession of "Sparks." Old Timers may decide for themselves whether or not this strange item is in the category of History or Hoax.

-Anon.

Graveyard of Ships

Each dot is a mute record of a marine tragedy that occurred over the centuries in the English Channel and on the Coast of Britain. Some received worldwide attention while others were on silent quest with history and mostly forgotten by mankind. Perhaps if wireless had been invented centuries earlier, there would not have been so many dots on our map.



EPISODES & EXPERIENCES

Edited by Fred Rosebury

MYSTERIOUS

WW-2 NAVAL ALARM

Harry C. Christensen

AT SEA, SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, 1942, Aboard the USTS SS SANTA ROSA (W.R. Grace & Co.

We had a GQ ("man your battle stations"). Among our task force 6814-J, Naval escorts, cruisers, destroyers and other craft were picking up an audio signal on radar and radio compass gear which appeared to emanate from the SANTA ROSA. Officers, men and USN Armed Guards searched the ship thoroughly for hours. Messages were exchanged between the SANTA ROSA'S bridge and the other vessels, which were still picking up the mysterious signal from our ship.

A message came from COSPAC (Commander Southwest Pacific): "SIGNAL STILL POSITIVE."

Portable radios among the SANTA ROSA'S personnel were forbidden on deck although some may have been stowed in the cargo holds.

Squads were detailed to go over the ship with a fine-tooth comb from bow to stern and from port to starboard.

The signal was located as coming from the general area of the ship's sick bay. An intensive examination finally found that the ship's dental officer was using an electric sterilizer for his instruments. This machine was plugged into the ship's mains and the water was boiling merrily. On pulling the plug, it was quickly determined by an exchange of messages that the strange signal had now disappeared.

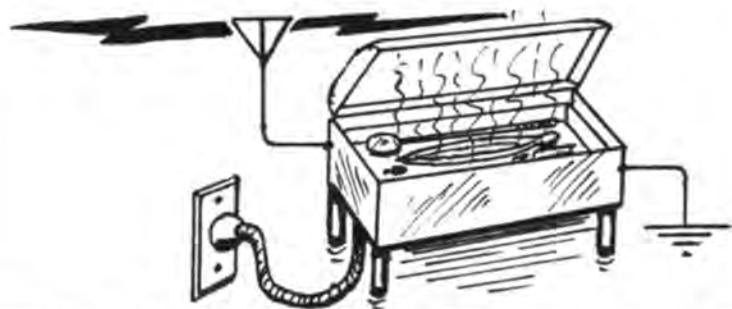
Due to a partial short circuit or some other defect, the sterilizer was emitting an audio signal on a 360° radar track. This signal discovered by a frantic search, could have provided a means for possible attack by enemy submarines or other craft; luckily, we stopped it in time.

As night had fallen before the offending emission was discovered, we were required to use the electric light blinker system for conveying messages among the ships in the task force.

What a scary night that was!

13 Sept. 1980

- Harry C. Christensen 3507-V
26 Reeves Road
Port Jefferson NY 11777



FR

Unique Navy Signal System

By D. K. deNEUF

The first Naval use of any light projector on record for signalling purposes was on board a Union warship blocking a Confederate-held port during the Civil War. Depending on the location and brilliance of the sun, it could even be used to a limited extent during daylight hours.

In 1877 Lt. W. Wood perfected a "Morse code blinker light signal" for use in the U.S. Navy. In 1891 a French inventor by the name of Ardois developed an unusual signal light system which was introduced into some squadrons of the U.S. Navy. It utilized the Morse code as a basis but was distinctly different from any other system, and employed a display of red and white lights arranged in four units vertically with each unit consisting of red and white lamps closely spaced and appearing from a distance as a single unit. The character indications were read from top to bottom. A red light indicated a dot ("R" on the figure below) and a white light ("W") represented a dash. The lights were operated and controlled through an ingenious keyboard device.

A	B	C	D	E
(R)	(W)	(W)	(W)	(R)
(W)	(R)	(R)	(R)	()
()	(R)	(W)	(R)	()
()	(R)	(R)	()	()

Numerals were indicated by secondary meanings of letters starting with "Q" as 1, "U" for 2, etc., ending with "Z" for zero. To make a numeral sign the upper light was pulsed or "blinked." Other special signals were designated for "error," "negative," "affirmative," etc.

All elements making up the code character were flashed on at one time with the keyboard unit. In a sense this system might be considered one of the fastest manual code transmission methods of those days, since all elements of each code character were transmitted simultaneously rather than the customary practice of progressively "building" a Morse code letter.

For some reason the Ardois system was not popular and was abandoned in favor of the Morse code blinker method. Perhaps the communicators preferred the Morse blinkers, somewhat like U.S. telegraphers who refused to change from the old code invented by Samuel F. B. Morse to the new code adopted as a worldwide standard at the International Telegraph Conference held in Berlin in 1851.

In the early 1900s the electric arc was introduced in searchlight form in the Navy, which was quick to develop a venetian-blind type of shutter controlled by a telegraph type key for signalling purposes. These were powerful enough to use effectively for 9 or 10 miles during the day and some 16 miles at night. Later someone thought up the idea of directing the beams to a cloud at night and this often extended the readable range beyond the line-of-sight to as much as 50 miles.

SOWP Swiss Chapter

EDELWEISS CHAPTER MEET

Pictured at right are members of our SWISS CHAPTER taken at their quarterly meeting Nov. 6 1982 in Zurich. The Edelweiss Chapter is quite active. Eric Walter, Director invites visiting SOWPers to contact him and if a meeting scheduled, you would be welcome to attend. His QTH: Stegenweg 44, 3172 Niederwangen/BE, Switzerland. Phone: 031-341833. Pictured L/R: (seated): Ulrich Laub, Bruno Maier, Paul Renkowitz, Urs Rauber, Franz Mueller, Herbert Frei, Reto Furrer. (Standing) Walter Zuercher, Bernhard Pfander, Eric Walter, Chrisoph Berner, Robert Lustenberger, Harald Ihringer, Hans Buehler and Will Baumgartner.



THEY MADE HISTORY



E PISODES

&

EXPERIENCES

E

Rustbucket Herald

Letters:

PEARL HARBOR REMINISCENCE

"Where were you on December 7th, 1941?" is a question that will be re-asked with varying degrees of emotion by anyone old enough to have been involved in the action or aware of its implications.

Not that there weren't some straws in the wind. While dropping into Augie's Seamen's Slopchest in Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, an extremely worried Augie presented a week-old letter from his son in the U.S. Army, stationed in Oahu: "We are expecting the Japanese to attack any time, and are holding day and night air-raid drills," was one of several dramatic statements it contained.

The month was July. "You don't get anything like this in the newspapers," said Augie; and I agreed.

On December 7th, the self-unloader ALPENA/WADU was downbound below Detroit in heavy river traffic with the captain in the pilot-house and the chief mate on the bridge. Three receivers were going in the radio shack: one on 500 kc, another on 2 mc radio-telephone - since almost all Lake vessels had now converted - and a third on a Detroit broadcast station. A startled voice broke in on 2 mc to call Lorain, Ohio: "Do you have any information on an attack on Pearl Harbor?" But Lorain didn't answer. Seconds later the BC station came on with the announcement.

Pounding up to the pilothouse with the news, I was met by Chief Mate Winter, who looked incredulous to say the least: "I expect you and the steward have been at the vanilla extract again," he quipped; but Captain Broadwell snapped "take over" at Winter, and came below. As we listened while the details of death and destruction came in, he opined "Nothing is going to be quite the same after this," and he was right.

- Frank E. Reisdorf 1801-P
KA1GGY
136 Washington Street
Topsfield, MA 01983

The following letter appeared in the NEW YORK TIMES of August 29, 1980, under the heading "THE TITANIC, A LEMON."

To the Editor:

Regarding the current interest in the White Star Liner TITANIC - "the greatest, fastest, etc," it may be well to remember a few facts:

She was preceded in service almost one year earlier by her identical twin sister OLYMPIC which served on the North Atlantic until March 1935.

The two ships were powered by the most obsolescent engines of the day: reciprocating steam on two of the three propeller shafts, with a single turbine on the center shaft.

The two ships were some 15 percent slower than Cunard's LUSITANIA and MAURETANIA, which employed turbines on all four propeller shafts and which held the North Atlantic speed record from 1907 to 1929.

In summary, the TITANIC was something of a lemon. May she rest in peace.

- Sven H. Dodington
Mountain Lakes, N.J., Aug. 19, 1980

A DOCKET OF NAA

EDITOR S.O.W.P.:

Here's why I was especially interested in your latest NAA-NSS story (which is a dandy!). This is from my old logbook which I maintained until 1930. This logbook contained 129 entries, the first five of which are as follows:

"MEMORANDUM: Heard NAA for first time on my own set on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1916.

"With ordinary galena, could hear WCX about foot from phones. With NAA-tested galena, could hear him almost a yard away.

"Heard weather report from NAA for first time on Dec. 29, 1916 at 10:05 p.m.

"8JV could be heard in the dining room with phones laying on the table (about 20 feet away). (Cyril Kreighbaum, later 8NQ).

"Copied NAA about six inches from phones using 2 bedsprings as an aerial, and a galena detector."

October, 1980

-- Regards and best wishes
(Ralph: "FO")
Ralph C. Folkman
586-SGP
4338 W. 137th Street
Cleveland OH 44135

TO THE EDITOR

Hi; many thanks, and congrats for a job (INTERCOM) well done - for this terrific new and unusually interesting idea. The INTERCOM is most entertaining as well as informative. And may I express my thanks for your use of standard-size print for easy reading. (There have been issues of the SPARKS JOURNAL when the print was so small that fine articles had to be passed by).

That's an excellent picture of Jim Brown! Sheesh! What a good looker! Talked with him just a few days prior to his leaving for FFZ, where he was going to revisit some of our old haunts over there.

May I wish you continued success and the best of everything!

April 27, 1981

Vy 73.....
Ray D. Ferguson
1091-SGP
P.O. Box 421
Randolph, VT 05060

TO THE EDITOR

I would like to discuss a problem which eventually should go to the MARAD people. But at the moment I am projecting my thoughts to the S.O.W.P. for comment.

We who go down to the sea in ships must conduct a weekly test of an antiquated type of MF/HF lifeboat radio transceiver, to which we must trust our lives. This equipment is hand-cranked, with radio tubes, and weighing 40 to 60 pounds, with a wire antenna to be erected on board the lifeboat.

I will admit it is better than nothing. However, in this day of sophisticated solid-state gear, I would welcome improvements, looking forward to a 25-pound or lighter, modern channelized SSB/CW transceiver covering 500 kHz as well as 4, 6, 8, 12 and 22 MHz, having about 100 watts of output connected to a lightweight whip or helium balloon-suspended wire. It should be powered by a permanently-installed battery, maintained in a charged state automatically by the ship's generator but also capable of hand-crank charging at sea.

No doubt others have had similar thoughts. Now let us see if we can get some action.

May 27, 1981

73,
Paul L. Schmidt 1413-P
214 N. Washington St.
Bloomfield, IN 47424
W9HD

Letters Letters Letters Letters

EDITOR, SOCIETY OF WIRELESS PIONEERS:

Just returned from Iraq where I have been erecting some radio transmitters. As you know, there is a lot of trouble there which is why I have been late in responding to your communication.

In the meantime I changed my address without informing you. Your correspondence was sent to my old address. Please note this in your records. Also, do not send the Journal as I must change my address frequently because of my various foreign assignments. When I settle somewhere I will let you know so that you can forward the Journal again, but for now it would be a lot of trouble what with all the changes.*

73s
Jan Elburg - 2890-M
Engelenburg str. 32
Arnhem, Holland

WHAT ARE DASHES WITHOUT DOTS?

By Pat Buchanan - 3089-M

The control station which served the Military Headquarters was working one of his outstations and suffering badly from poor conditions as well as being much overburdened with traffic, all of which was very overdue.

In his wisdom the control operator reverted to using a bug key which, in the strictest sense of the "Military Word" was against the rules. The chief reason (I suspect) for this transgression was that the transmitters in use at the time had very slow keying relays, which meant that they could not follow code in excess of twenty wpm without making the dots very, very clippy - or nonexistent.

The outstation operator who had also been suffering from the poor conditions, upon hearing the control station using bug key, lost his composure completely and broke into the traffic in plain text, saying in a rather beseeching tone "OM, UR DOTS ARE MISSING!"

On hearing this the control operator replied, also in plain text and in a very slow and precise fist which barely concealed his IMPERIAL FURY "OM, I AM VERY BUSY - READ THE DASHES FOR NOW - I WILL SEND THE DOTS LATER!"

It is sadly not recorded what terms of incarceration each malefactor served in the glasshouse.

This is a true story which shows that we military operators have a sense of humor even though it is not much appreciated by the Radio Security Service. □

TO THE EDITOR:

Just back from Bangladesh as a hop-on R/O on board a big Dutch dredger which is going to deepen the fairway entrance off Karnaphuly River to Chittagong.

Station (on dredger) fitted with R/T 300 watts, long and short wave, special ITT A-3 transmitter SSB, Telesover Radio (Scandinavian SRA) 400 watts with Philips coding machine with memory, satellite navigation, two radars, etc.

My 74th birthday (with cake but no candles) I was entering the Suez Canal at Port Said.

Best regards, health and peace to all from -

- J. H. de Nijs 3284-SGP
Rembrandtlaan 614
3362AW Sliedrecht
Netherlands

ISN'T IT SO?

He came ashore quite late in the fall
And said that he was through with it all.
He also claimed, "I'm done with the key—
This stuff's the bunk—no more code for me!"

He built a set for music alone
And listened to the saxophone's moan.
He tuned from jazz to symphonies grand—
A baritone or a noisy brass band.

A year or so elapsed, as they say,
And whether it was KDKA
Or Mexico, or up in the North,
This set of his brought all of them forth.

But once, right at the height of his dial,
He heard some code and lingered awhile.
Cape May was there, a "workin'" some ships—
It made him think of all of his trips.

Now he sits and copies any old hash—
No music at all—it's all "dot and dash,"
And while he logs a "Limy" or Jap,
His "Junior Op" is parked on his lap!
—R. C. Folkman.

DOTS AND SPLASHES

Edited by RALPH C. FOLKMAN

THE BRINY DEEP

'Tis many a time that the poets did write
Of storm-beaten ships in a black, blowin' night.
'Tis hundreds of time, yes, thousands I'll say,
When writers wrote stuff about wind-driven spray.

But I know a night that no poem can reach;
A night when the best of 'em wished for the beach;
A wind that kept yard-arm and riggin' a-scream;
A sea that would wash decks regardless of beam.

A clang from the chadburn—the Chief gave her more,
But progress was slight in the storm's mighty roar.
The tarps were a-whippin' while all hands made fast—
I tell you this night made one think of his past.

The pilot house squeaked and it twisted and wrenched
When in plunged our Sparks—to the skin he was drenched
His face was ghost-white—he was weak on his feet;
But he managed to whisper, "Sir, when do we eat?"



The following lines are dedicated to those members of the Black Gang who, by strange and curious methods, figure where the ship is when she ain't.

With a pair of calipers and a 12 inch rule
The Chief climbed on his cabin stool
He glanced out the port at a bit of land
As he shifted six pencils from hand to hand.

Then he took a bearing on God knows what
And hurriedly grabbed the old grease pot
Jumped down below the 'revs' to take
And wound up the steam gauge by mistake.

He looked at the clock and yelled for steam
Then wrote in the log "Diamond Head's abeam"
Righto Chief! as the Aussies say
Abeam - 12,000 miles away.

With a 3 inch pipe and a monkey wrench
He took a sight on the old work bench
He opened up last year's almanac
And through page ten stuck a carpet tack.

On an ancient chart of Baffin's Bay
The course he marked with a corset stay
An oiler skidded as a wave made her roll
So he measured the slip with an old pike pole.

He added, deducted and divided by three
And said "dead ahead's - Cape Flattery"
Navigation to him is mere child's play
Y't Flattery's 3,000 miles away.

He took the bilge sounding, added the log
Deducted the draft, made allowance for fog,
Divided the tonnage by the pressure of steam
And added the length to the width of her beam.

By the sea temperature her speed multiplied
Threw the Old Man's barometer over the side
Blew the whistle three times, set his watch back
one hour
Tied the safety valve down with half sack flour.

One more rev, he told the Chief Mate,
Will bring her in sight of the Golden Gate
Better grab something, Chief, and take a turn
For the Gates 2,000 miles astern.

...Anon

COMMENT ON INTERCOM EDITION

1. Paper stock seems perfectly acceptable and a good economic compromise.

2. Paper size: any size that's most convenient for those producing the journal.

3. Data re new members, COA, etc: Danged handy but don't know how you can keep up the volume of work. I consider the Silent Keys a must.

4. Vox-Pop, etc: Consider the INTERCOM A issue very interesting; those letters and tidbits make it even more so.

5. Fred and Staff: Hope you are holding your own, Fred, with the illness; thank you SO much for your work.

P.S. If you have a rogues' gallery, this one (pix of me) will help scare the pesky salesmen away!!
(ED.NOTE: The shirt, maybe; surely not the face!)

E. H. (Ted) Heavens VE7CHE
13216-100th Avenue
Surrey, B.C., Canada
V3T 1H5 2556-P

EXPANDS OUR HORIZONS IN THIS LITTLE WORLD



SOWP NETS COVER THE GLOBE

Captain L.C.Machen

Enjoyed the article by Dave Hardacker (SPARKS JOURNAL 3,3, p.21, 1980).

I was on the staff of the NRL Director Captain (now Admiral, Ret.) from 1948 to 1952 and was in contact with their Naval Material School which was housed in the grounds of NRL at Anacostia, MD. It was a very interesting assignment in which I was Administrative Services Officer, with several collateral duties involving the various sciences.

Some of the real wireless old-timers were in Radio 1 and Radio 2 Divisions: Gebhart, for one. In the early twenties they noted the "target" effect when some of the big "Bay Boats" passed between them on the Anacostia shore and Haines Point (DC), in the first glimmer of what would later on become radar.

There were some fine and devoted people in the Lab; I treasure their friendship and cooperation. I guess all of them are retired now.

Arthur Godfrey was a student at the Naval Radio Material School at the time. I believe he was then with the Coast Guard. The School was transferred to the West Coast and became an Electronics Training Center: at San Diego, I believe, to be exact. It was truly a very practical education, for then a CRM was not only an operator but also a technician. The officers who ran the school published a book on mathematics which became a widely-used text.

Surely do miss my cattle and the dairy farm routine, but in its place I have all kinds of settling-in problems. I have five acres, three of which need clearing. Might go for a small tractor and make like a CB.

Incidentally, Thomas Edison was one of the main pushers for the establishment of NRL. The SOWP Chapter by that name might be interested.

My only livestock now consists of one dog named Baby and a cat whom I call Midnight. Both very black and with identical white markings. (They are not related!) Baby is a Labrador Retriever: never misses a chance to swim in nearby Tiger Lake.

Hope to visit my brother in Baltimore soon and, if possible, look up some of the old brasspounders and retired Navy people.

The NAA-NSS issue of the Journal was extremely interesting. My first visit to those stations was around 1919 when I was living in Baltimore, my home town.

Would like to comment that the height of the aeronautical ceiling was judged by the towers by the planes operating in and out of the old Washington-Hoover Airport, which was located approximately where the Pentagon is now. One runway was crossed by a road leading to Alexandria! It required traffic control. The rough "ceiling" estimate was 800 feet when the cloud cover just touched the top of the antenna.

Was thinking about how things happen in threes: my closest friend Charlie Seibold (2306-SGP), Oscar Harrison (207-P), and Ed. Laker (Baltimore Mail Line WTOP), all cast off within a short time of each other. All three, as I remember, studied wireless at the Commercial Radio Institute in Baltimore. The owner/instructor, Mr. Leight, was an ex-Army Signal Corps man.

Kinda rambling note but thought there would be some interest in the wireless towers being used to judge the height of the ceiling at the old airport.

SPARKS JOURNAL is really great; keep up the good work.* I am still on dead center with my writing efforts - namely, the ABCs of the High Seas.

All the best. Hope this finds all hands in good health and happiness.

10 October, 1980

73s
Captain L. C. Machen
2376-P
Rt.3, Box 438
Live Oak FL 32060
Phone: (904) 362-4480

P.S: If memory serves me right, Pete Fernandez was with PAA at one time.** I remember that he was the fastest guy on a straight key I had ever known. LCM.

*Thanks for the compliment, Lee. (Ed.)

**Yes, he was. (Ed.)

Cyrus R. Truitt

NAA BROADCASTS DECLARATION OF WAR (1917)

EDITOR, SPARKS JOURNAL:

I have just received my copy of the NAA-NSS 1980 SPARKS JOURNAL (3, 3) and was greatly interested in the references to the old wireless station NAA.

I hunted up my log for April 6, 1917 and found the following:

WASHINGTON DC - THE PRESIDENT (Wilson)
HAS SIGNED THE ACT OF CONGRESS WHICH
DECLARES THAT A STATE OF WAR NOW EXISTS
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND GERMANY....
Dated April 6th, 1917, 12:00 noon from
Washington.

I was employed at the time as an engineer at the local Electric Light Generating Plant, working the night shift, so that I was at home during daylight hours. It was my hobby at the time to listen by wireless to whatever was on the air.

One regular listening time was during the daily QST of news from NAA at Arlington VA, across the river from Washington DC, well over 1000 miles from Novinger MO where I lived. My receiver consisted of a handmade tuning coil wound on a cardboard tube about three inches in diameter, a galena crystal detector, and a pair of headphones. My antenna was a single wire running from the top of my house to the top of our barn, about 200 feet distant.

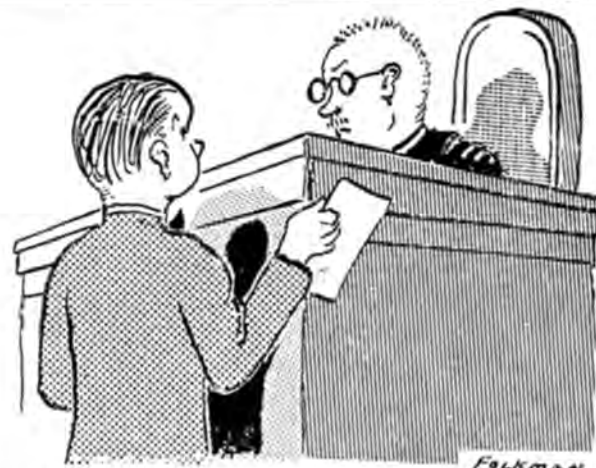
I was twenty-seven at the time, and was soon in the U.S. Infantry because of my interest in and knowledge of radio. I was put in charge of our regimental wireless station.

I was in France until several months after the armistice was signed. The army-issue radio was a very crude affair, the receiver being almost an exact duplicate of my set at home. The transmitter was only an oversized Ford spark coil connected to a one-wire antenna stretched between two 4-ft. stakes about 60 feet apart. It was quite reliable for communication with another similar station one or two miles away.

Am now in my 90th year, but the memory of those days still lingers as a major part of my life.

17 Sept. 1980

Sincerely,
Cyrus R. Truitt 1736-SGP
Box 296, Novinger MO
63559
(ex 91Y when MO was in
Dist.9)



"THE DEFENDANT SAID, YOUR HONOR,
THAT HE SPEAKS ENGLISH FLUENTLY,
ITALIAN AND SPANISH FAIRLY WELL,
AND INTERNATIONAL MORSE WITH A
SLIGHT SWING."



Otto Von Guericke



James Clerk Maxwell



Amos Dolbear



Andre Marie Ampere

HISTORICAL PAPER

Who Should be Honored ?

By Prof. H.J.Scott

(Continued from Page 1)

For essentially a century the question of who should be given credit for providing us with wireless (radio) has been argued. It is still, today, a moot question.

Such records as exist indicate that in all probability the first person to predict such a thing as wireless was a Munich professor, C. A. Steinheil who in 1837 stated publicly that such a thing as "wireless communication will soon be possible". In the minds of his associates, this pronouncement seemed utterly impossible of ever being accomplished. As a result, they seriously questioned his sanity quite publicly! Professor Steinheil never did indicate just how he thought that this communication might be accomplished.

Somewhat over one hundred years ago in 1865, a brilliant mathematical physicist of Scotch ancestry by the name of James Clerk Maxwell gave to the world his electromagnetic theory. His analysis led him to the conclusion that electrical impulses travelled through space in the form of electromagnetic waves in the same manner, and with the same velocity as light.

It would most certainly seem that this was the egg from which wireless was hatched. However, Maxwell himself entertained no such ideas.

Following upon the heels of Maxwell's disclosures in time, Dr. Mahlon Loomis, a dentist in Washington, D.C. became interested in wireless and began experimenting with electricity.

His first bid for fame was a patent granted him in 1854 for the manufacture of dental plates known as, "Loomis False Teeth Plates".

Educationally he had no mathematical background and was completely incapable of understanding the profound mathematics expounded by Maxwell in his treatise on electromagnetic waves. Considerable doubt exists that he ever even heard of Maxwell.

However, in 1866 he indicated that he had been able to transmit signals between two mountain ridges 14 miles apart. In this experiment his antenna was essentially a kite flown with copper wire instead of a string. The lower end of the wire was connected to ground through a galvanometer (the forerunner of our present day ammeter) for his receiver.

At a distant point a similar kite and wire were flown and the lower end of this wire was connected to ground through a switch used as a key. Dr. Loomis explicitly stated that the transmitter had no batteries of any kind connected to it.

As many of you know and have experienced, an elevated wire such as an antenna can, when left unconnected, build up quite a 'shocking' static charge! The system described by Dr. Loomis depends for its operation upon electrostatic induction.

On the 22nd of May 1872, following some briefly conducted experiments in the Blue Ridge mountains, exhibiting but a modicum of success, Dr. Loomis requested of Congress an appropriation of \$50,000.00 to pursue his investigations. Congress denied the request.

On the 30th of July 1872 Dr. Loomis was granted a U.S. Patent #129,971. The essential part of the letters patent indicated, ".....The utilization of NATURAL ELECTRICITY.....by suitable conductors.....relying upon the disturbance produced in the two electro-opposite bodies of earth and atmosphere producing communication WITHOUT AN ARTIFICIAL BATTERY OR THE FURTHER USE OF WIRES OR CABLES TO CONNECT THE OPERATING STATIONS". (Caps mine in the above quotation).

This was accompanied by a drawing illustrating his idea of how the atmosphere would produce a signal at the receiver and was supposed to show how signals were transmitted. It was on the basis of this pictorial illustration that the patent was granted to Dr. Loomis.

Following this, he dropped the idea and did not pursue it further. No practical workable system ever came out of his ideas, nor was any practical telegraphic demonstration ever forthcoming.

An American physics teacher, Amos Emerson Dolbear read a paper before the Society of Telegraph Engineers and Electricians in London on the 23rd of March 1882. The subject of his paper was "The Development of a New Telephone System".

In his demonstration he connected one side of a condenser microphone to ground through a battery. The other side of the microphone he connected to an elevated wire. Between ground and another elevated wire parallel to and not so far from the first wire, was connected a telephone receiver. Speech impinging upon the microphone could be heard in the telephone receiver.

Here the operation has the earmarks of magnetic induction between two wires in contrast to electromagnetic radiation.

In 1882 a patent was issued to Dolbear on his system. In a matter of speaking, one might almost consider Dolbear's system to be a forerunner of our present day radio telephony which, however, did not appear in a practical sense for several decades.

There seems to be considerable doubt as whether or not Dolbear had ever heard of Maxwell and his work. No further progress towards a practical, workable system ever came of his demonstration.

On a farm near Murray, Kentucky in 1885, a telephone employee, Nathan Stubblefield, gave a public demonstration of what he called "Wireless Voice Transmission". This he accomplished by driving two metallic rods into the earth a number of feet apart. A telephone receiver was connected between the two rods. At a modest distance away, two similar rods were driven into the earth and a microphone in series with a battery was connected between them. Speech directed into the microphone was heard in the telephone receiver. Later tests were conducted between two rods driven into a river bank, and two wires trailing behind a boat off shore showing similar results.

Elated by these results, Stubblefield claimed ability to send messages by his system through the earth, the water, or the air, to ANY POINT on earth! This was never carried out or demonstrated in any further manner.

Stubblefield's system depends for its operation upon ohmic conduction, and not at all upon electromagnetic radiation. Operation over any large distances simply would not be practicable. This was a far cry from the broadcasting of radio signals as we know it today!

Heinrich Hertz, a young German physicist became interested in Maxwell's predictions, indicating the possibility of electromagnetic radiations of wavelengths much greater than those of light but having the same characteristics of propagation. To demonstrate Maxwell's theory, Hertz set up some laboratory experiments in 1887 in the hopes that such waves did, in fact exist, and that they behaved like light waves.

Hertz succeeded in transmitting electromagnetic waves across his small laboratory and was able to demonstrate with his experiments that these waves did exist and that they did obey the laws of physical optics thereby confirming Maxwell's theory.

Being an experimental physicist by nature and training, and having succeeded in his experiments to his own satisfaction, Hertz was not interested in pursuing the subject further. In fact, he commented sometime later to a colleague that he saw no future for electromagnetic waves beyond the laboratory!

However, these Hertzian waves as they became known, aroused the interest of experimenters in many parts of the world.

In a brief magazine article in 1892 Sir William Crookes made the prediction that Hertzian waves might be used someday for telegraphic communication through space. However, no suggestion as to how this might be accomplished was forthcoming from him.

Sir Oliver Lodge received his Doctor of Science degree from the Royal College of science in 1877. By 1881 he had been advanced to the rank of professor at University College in Liverpool. He was barely nosed out by Hertz in the discovery of electromagnetic radiation.

The coherer was named by Lodge. He was the first one to suggest that the coherer developed by Branly might be used as a detector of electromagnetic radiations. This he demonstrated in 1894.

Lodge, while working with Marconi sometime later, developed the principles of tuning (resonating) wireless circuits, thereby making it possible to operate on a specific wavelength.

Aleksandr Stepanovich Popov was a teacher of electrical engineering and physics at the Naval College at Kronstadt. In 1894 his interest had been stirred by a lecture given by Sir Oliver Lodge describing the work of Heinrich Hertz.

Popov immediately began experimenting with coherers in studies he was pursuing in connection with the prediction of thunder storms by wireless. Following these investigations, Popov published a paper in January 1896 indicating his belief



Michael Faraday



Alexander S. Popoff



Georg Simon Ohm



Mahlon Loomis

Wireless Hall of Fame



Thomas Alva Edison
AMERICA'S GREATEST INVENTOR

BORN: February 11, 1847
Milton, O. DIED: October 18, 1931
West Orange, N. J.



William Henry Eccles
RADIO PHYSICIST

BORN: August 23, 1875
Furness, England



Emory Leon Chaffee
SOLVED ELECTRONIC PROBLEMS

BORN: April 15, 1885
Somerville, Mass.



Hermann L. F. Von Helmholtz
HE GAVE HERTZ A PROBLEM

BORN: August 31, 1821
Potsdam, Germany DIED: September 8, 1894
Charlottenburg, Germany



Charles Samuel Franklin
BEAMED THE WIRELESS WAVES

BORN: March 21, 1879
Walthamston, England



William David Coolidge
PHYSICO-CHEMIST IN ELECTRONICS

BORN: October 21, 1873
Hudson, Mass.



Ralph Bown

SPECIALIST IN OVERSEAS RADIOTELEPHONY

BORN: February 22, 1891
Fairport, New York



Albert Wallace Hull

PROLIFIC INVENTOR OF ELECTRON TUBES

BORN: April 19, 1880
Southington, Conn.

WHO SHOULD BE HONORED ?

By Prof. Herbert J. Scott

(Continued from Page 31)

that his apparatus IF PERFECTED could be used for the reception of signals over a distance without wires PROVIDED a suitable transmitter COULD BE BUILT. In this paper he presented a diagram and a general description of a receiver for wireless signals embracing the coherer. This antedated Marconi's first publication. Nothing more was forthcoming.

The disclosure in this paper is the basis for the claims made by the U.S.S.R. that Popov "invented wireless"

Unfortunately Popov was so involved with his teaching duties that he never did follow through on any ideas he might have had and consequently dropped the subject.

After reading the article by Brookes suggesting the possibility of using electromagnetic waves for telegraphy at a distance, the interest of a young 18 year old lad was aroused. He then and there made it his life's goal to perfect and establish a SYSTEM of wireless communication of worldwide extent, on land as well as on sea!

This young man was Guglielmo Marconi. Born of an Italian father and an Irish mother in Bologna, Italy in 1874, he was educated at Leghorn University and at the University of Bologna. Here he studied what was then called the Science of Electricity.

Encouraged in his ambitions by the experiments of Hertz, he decided to carry out some experiments of his own. These were conducted on his father's farm and in these experiments he replaced the dipole radiating system of Hertz by an elevated wire and ground. Between these he connected his transmitter. At his receiver he used the same sort of elevated wire, which he called an antenna, and ground.

Having studied Branly's coherer and improved upon it, he followed the suggestion of Lodge and used it as his detecting device.

Marconi's first transmission took place in 1895 and extended over a distance of a little less than two miles. Following this in 1896, when he was 22 years old, Marconi took his equipment to England. There the British government witnessed a demonstration of his equipment after which they issued him a patent for his system of wireless telegraphy.

The following year the British Marconi Company was formed with 23 year old Marconi as its chief engineer! In these early days Marconi was materially helped by Lodge who, as we indicated earlier, developed the idea of tuned circuits. This made it possible for operations to be carried out on a specified wavelength.

The United States Navy invited Marconi to come to this country in 1899 in order to demonstrate his system. He responded and his wireless was installed on the battleships Massachusetts and New York. In the resulting tests communications were carried out between the two ships over a distance of 36 miles.

(Continued on Page 33)

Who Should Be Honored ?

The Wireless Hall of Fame

(Continued from Page 32)



Valdemar Poulsen
HARNESSED THE ARC TO WIRELESS

BORN: November 23, 1867
Copenhagen, Denmark
DIED: August 6, 1912
Denmark

One of Marconi's dreams was to someday bridge the Atlantic Ocean with wireless waves. To attempt this Herculean effort - and many scientists were convinced that it could never be done - Marconi set up a transmitter at Poldhu, a tiny place on the Cornwall coast of England, not far from Lizard Head. The receiving station was located on the frigid and windswept coast of Newfoundland at St. Johns.

On Thursday the 12th of December 1901, the first wireless signal, the letter "S" was transmitted across the Atlantic. This signal was again received the next day at the prearranged time. It is interesting to note that while the scientists of the day had insisted that such a transmission was utterly impossible because the rays emitted from the transmitter travelled in straight lines and that Poldhu to Newfoundland was away around the curvature of the earth, yet the transmission did take place. It must be remembered, however, that the Heaviside Layer and its effect on radio transmission was completely unknown at this time.

Following the trans-Atlantic transmission the commercial development of wireless proceeded at a rapid pace both ashore and aboard ship.

During his lifetime Marconi was the recipient of many honors. He was knighted by the Italian Government in 1897, awarded the Nobel prize in physics jointly with Professor Braun in 1909. The title of Marquis was bestowed upon him by the Italian Government in 1929. In addition to these he received many other honorary titles and degrees. Guglielmo Marconi died in Rome on the 20th day of July 1937 at the age of 63.

Looming on the early horizon was another contender for recognition in the wireless arena, one Nikola Tesla. His many accomplishments in the electrical field and his great contributions to the welfare of mankind are well known today.

Tesla was a Serbian who came to these shores as a 28 year old immigrant in 1884. Four years later he presented a paper on a "New System of Alternate Current Motors and Transformers". As a result of his concept of the rotating magnetic field he invented the a-c motor, the a-c generator, and he also gave us the polyphase system of a-c power distribution. This we know today as our three-phase system in this country.

It was about 1889 that he became interested in alternating currents in the radio frequency spectrum. An outstanding development in this area was the radio frequency resonant transformer, more popularly known as the "Tesla Coil".

Tesla suggested the possibility of wireless telegraphy in 1892 but unfortunately like Professor Steinheil in 1837 who made the same suggestion, he never did develop any equipment to consummate his suggestion.

Later in 1898, having become interested in remote control by this time he demonstrated a model ship controlled by wireless. From remote control he went on to become interested and to work on a system for the transmission through the earth by wireless of large amounts of power. This, however, he never brought into fruition. After this he showed little further interest in wireless.

Tesla was a man with a remarkably active mind, an inventive mind. He was referred to by some as a genius and by others as a near-genius. He had the facility of spewing out ideas at random like pellets from a shotgun. Some hit the target and were successful and some missed the target completely and resulted in naught.

Society, world-wide, is indebted to Nikola Tesla for much. We would very likely not have many of the labor saving devices we have today were it not for him.

Tesla and Edison became bitter enemies over their respective ideas about electric power transmission and utilization. Edison favored d-c power and d-c distribution; Tesla on the other hand favored the much more economic a-c power and a-c distribution. This feud carried on for a long time and in 1912 the Nobel prize in physics was awarded jointly to both Edison and Tesla. At this Tesla flew into a gigantic rage and utterly refused to accept it if he had to share it with Edison.

In his declining years Tesla became a lonely recluse and was regarded by many as a man of mystery. He never married. Tesla died at the age of 87 on 7 January 1943. At his death he was penniless and alone.

Another but later claimant for recognition in the field of wireless is the Reverend Father Joseph Murgas. He has been designated by the Wilkes-Barre newspapers as the "Father of Radio" and the "First and Foremost Inventor of Wireless Telegraphy". He has also been indicated by them as the "Oldest Operator of All Time".



Hans Christian Oersted
LIBERATED A MIGHTY FORCE

BORN: August 14, 1777
Roeskilde, Denmark
DIED: March 7, 1851
Copenhagen, Denmark



William Henry Preece
PIONEER IN "TELEGRAPHY BY INDUCTION"

BORN: February 15, 1834
Carmarvon, Wales
DIED: November 6, 1913
Carmarvon, Wales



Frederick Augustus Kolster
PERFECTED THE RADIO COMPASS

BORN: January 13, 1883
Geneva, Switzerland



Joseph John Thomson
DISCOVERER OF THE ELECTRON

BORN: December 18, 1856
Manchester, England
DIED: August 30, 1940
Cambridge, England



Ernst F. W. Alexanderson
DEVELOPED THE ALTERNATOR

BORN: January 23, 1873
Uppsala, Sweden



Harold DeForest Arnold
DESIGNER OF ELECTRON TUBES

BORN: September 3, 1883
Woodstock, Conn.
DIED: July 10, 1933
Summit, N.J.



Arthur Edwin Kennelly
PUT A CEILING ON RADIO

BORN: December 17, 1861
Bombay, India
DIED: June 18, 1939



(Continued on Page 34)

Wireless Hall of Fame



Greenleaf Whittier Pickard
INTRODUCED CRYSTAL DETECTORS

BORN: February 14, 1877
Portland, Me.

(Continued from Page 33)

Father Murgas received a patent on his system in May 1904. This places him as somewhat of a Johnny-come-lately in the scheme of things it would seem. With his system he transmitted a message from Wilkes-Barre to Scranton something of the order of 16 miles.

Carefull examination of his patent shows his sytem to be an equi-time system wherein the characters of the code corresponding to dots and dashes are all dots of equal time duration. The differentiation comes about through the characters representing dots of one audio tone and the characters corresponding dashes were of a different audio frequency. They were then translated at the receiver.

It is hard to justify his title of Father of Radio unless the designation is in deference to his religious title of Father. Nor can one really subscribe to the claim that he was the First and Foremost Inventor of wireless. As witness, Marconi's equipment was installed aboard the American Line St. Paul in 1899 and in this year the ship communicated with the wireless station on the Isle of Wight some 60 miles away. This was five years prior to father Murgas' patent! He was 10 years older than Marconi. Perhaps this is the basis of the claim of being the Oldest Operator of All time!

Each of the previously named men have been put forward at one time or another as the inventor of wireless. It must be remembered that in any area of endeavor it has always been important to be at the right place at the right time. Every school boy knows that Lief Ericson set foot on this continent centuries before Christopher Columbus. Yet Columbus is credited with having discovered America. Columbus just happened to be in the right place at the right time. So in a somewhat analogous manner it might be said that wireless has its Lief Ericsons and its Columbuses.

It is not for me to say who did or who did not invent wireless - if any ONE did. You have the story of the people involved and who worked in the area. You now may be the judge as to whom the credit should go.

Many years ago Sir Walter Scott in his "Lay of the Last Minstrel" expressed the situation most fluently by saying:

"I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas told to me."

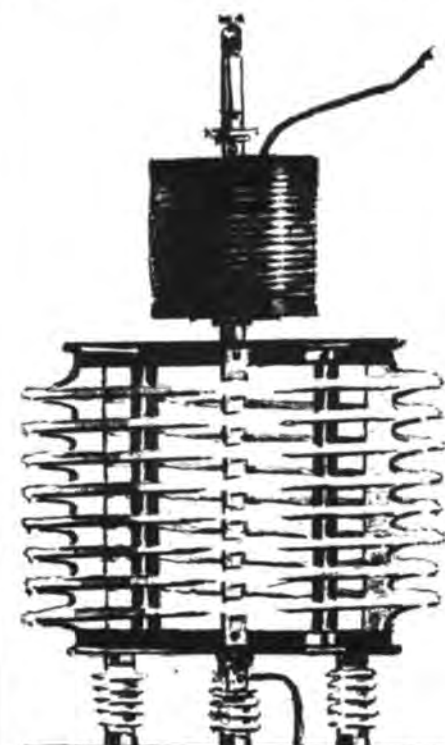
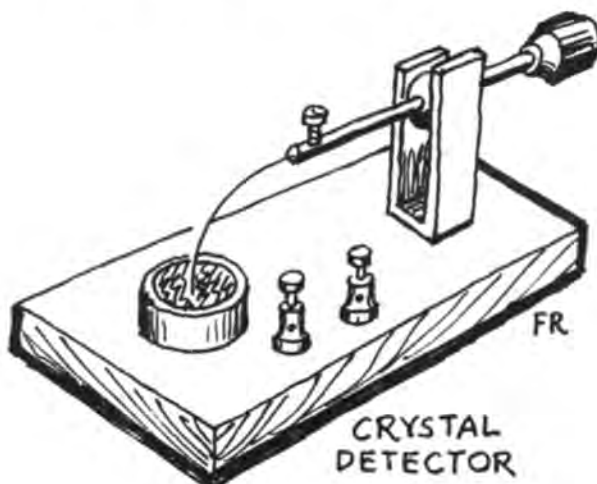
In rendering your decision it might be helpful to keep in mind the words of a collaborator of Edison's, a Dr. George M. Beard when he spoke on the subject of to whom the honor of a scientific discovery should be credited. He stated,".....The honor belongs not to him who first sees a thing, but to him who first sees it with expert eyes; not to him who drops an original suggestion, but to him who first makes that suggestion fruitful of results.....If to see with the eyes a phenomenon is to discover the law of which that phenomenon is a part then every schoolboy who, before the time of Newton, saw an apple fall, was a discoverer of the law of gravitation....."

I must leave you now to your cogitations. Should you find yourself on the horns of a dilemma, be assured that I am also.



NIKOLA TESLA

NIKOLA TESLA - Born 7-10-1857. Migrated to USA from Serbia in 1884. Employed by Thomas A. Edison at Orange NJ Lab same year Nikola became one of the world's great inventors with his name linked to nearly 800 inventions. His main field of interest - A/C motors which he invented in 1888 and polyphase currents in AC engineering. He was known as the "Electrical Wizard" of the 1890's and the 'Father' of Electrical Engineering. Inventions included 'wireless' systems and components but achievements in this field overshadowed by other interests.
WAB.



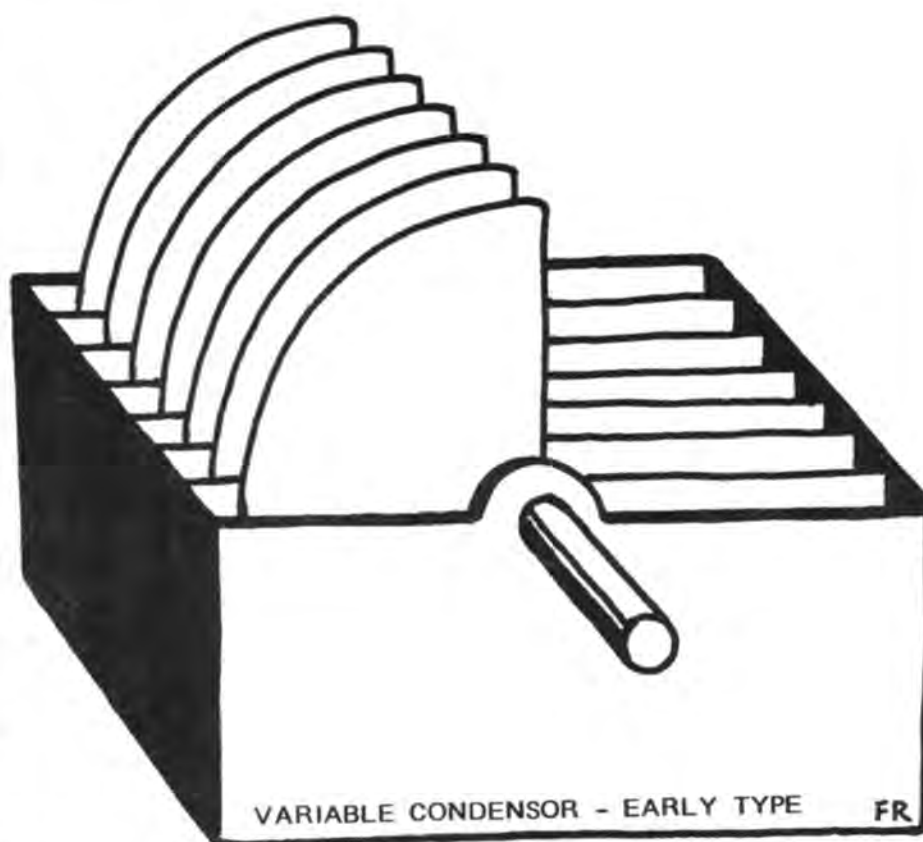
Editor's Note :

With the dawn of a New Year, I wish to thank all who have contributed memorabilia or historical records and data pertaining to the early day of the 'wireless' for their continuing interest in preserving the valuable records of the past and the communications heritage which is so meaningful to us all.

The men mentioned in this outstanding 'Historical Report' by Prof. Herbert J. Scott, were among the avant-garde of those whose ideas, theories, experiments and research enabled young Guglielmo Marconi to catalyse this accumulation of intelligence into a workable instrument called the "Wireless" for the benefit of mankind and the world. The early equipment was crude in nature but it was the fore-runner of a media system which today is so refined and sophisticated it has become difficult for many to comprehend the magic it has brought in its many and varied forms of communications it has brought mankind.

I wish to credit our late member and Society Historian, Dexter S. Bartlett 145-SGP [Silent Key 3-15-1982] for the collection of pictures used in this issue. It is understood the collection was originally published circa 1926. We hope to include all pictures along with additional ones in the forthcoming "Wireless & Nautical Almanac" scheduled for release later this year. Included will be an additional biographical sketch on each pioneer listed.

William A. Breniman - Editor



MYSTERY WEATHER AREAS (GMA)

By CHARLES P. KRAUSE

The Devil's Triangle, or Bermuda Triangle, through which we have sailed many times, continues to make newsprint.

Will we agree that there are at least two popularized mystery areas -- the Bermuda Triangle in the Atlantic area and another off Japan?

What do they have in common? There are similarities between them. Both lie based on the same latitude: 30 degrees North. Both are oblong blobs tilted at about 45 degrees to the right. Both lie just off a continental shelf -- to the right of a continent, both are centers of swirling currents.

Colliding surface currents and, thanks to the Glomar research, every indication of on-going underwater eddies as well, hot surface currents streaming out of the tropics and colder waters coming down from the polar and subpolar areas. They meet on the surface and they swirl clockwise. And in these two most legendary areas, the swirls make their tightest spiralling turns. These are geographical areas of extreme temperature variation, centers of hurricanes, whirlpools, oceanic and atmospheric disturbances and undersea eddies.

Let us refer to these mystery areas as geomagnetic anomalies, or GMA for short. There are eleven of them:

GMA-1. The Bermuda Triangle, also popularized as the Devil's Triangle:

Roughly bounded by three geographic points -- Bermuda, central Florida and Puerto Rico. It extends between 30 to 40 degrees North latitude and between 55 and 85 degrees West longitude. It sits over the Sargasso Sea, another of history's more unpleasant mythical centers.

To be more exact it isn't a triangle at all but it's more in the shape of an oblong sphere like a football with rounded ends.

GMA-2:

Based on latitude 30 degrees North and between longitudes 10 and 0 degrees (The Greenwich Meridian). It falls over the western end of the Mediterranean, covering parts of Morocco, Algeria and Gibraltar.

GMA-3. Emerges from latitude 30 degrees North and is entirely over land directly over Pakistan and Afghanistan, between 65 and 80 degrees East longitude.

GMA-4. Japan

Off the coast of Japan, 250 miles south of Honsyu over the Ramapo Depth, roughly between Honsyu and Okinawa, between latitude 30 and 44 degrees North and between longitudes 140 and 150 degrees East.

GMA-5.

Based on latitude 30 degrees North, between 160 and 140 degrees West longitude.

It lies in the North Pacific, northwest of the Hawaiian Islands, right over the Murray Fracture Zone, another area of extreme temperature variation. It appears to be where the northern Pacific currents are swept around against themselves by sub-arctic currents flowing south. It is nowhere near a continent.

GMA-6.

Approximately 30 degrees West longitude, latitude 30 degrees southeast of Brazil in the Brazil Basin. Centered over Trinidad and north of the Horse Latitudes.

GMA-7.

South Africa, between 30 and 40 degrees South latitude and 50 to 80 degrees, East longitude. East of the Malagasy Republic and Madagascar. Center of the equatorial currents. Sparsely traveled ocean area.

GMA-8.

Middle of the Indian Ocean. Based at 30 degrees South latitude, and between 90 and 110 degrees East longitude. North of the Diamantina Fracture Zone, west of the Australian coast and south of the Great Wharton Basin. This is an area of enormous depths, bad weather and is seldom sailed.

"SERVICE IS OUR MOTTO"

E. D. Hughes



In a recent issue of the SPARKS JOURNAL there was mention of the SS EMMA ALEXANDER/KKEE (SJ 2,2 p.17).

In the fall of 1924 I had charge of NPD, Tatoosh Island. We had an RM 1/c by the name of Wilkinson who was transferred. In order to get to Seattle he had to take the weekly mail boat out from Neah Bay and go on in to Seattle on a small coast ship. Thus lots of time was wasted when he could be on leave.

"The EMMA ALEXANDER goes by Tatoosh tomorrow," he said, "going to LA. Do you suppose she would pick me up if we were off Duncan Rock?"

We alerted the lighthouse people, who volunteered their small boat and a man from the weather station and I as crew. I called the EMMA next morning after she cleared Seattle and asked if they could pick up this passenger (Wilkinson). Came back a prompt reply that they could take him off Duncan Rock - and will try.

We waited about two hours, and at last she loomed up. A side hatch was open and two big seamen were waiting. The swells were running high; one minute we would be up to the hatch, next ten feet down. After several passes the seamen grabbed Wilkinson, and on the next pass we heaved his gear aboard and then took off for Tatoosh. Upon arriving, I called KKEE with a service message to the EMMA'S captain to convey our thanks.

There was a prompt reply:
"SERVICE IS OUR MOTTO"

Ah! For the good old days!

P.S. Not enough credit can go to Bill Breniman for starting the SOWP. I must say he and his people are doing a great job!

Rte.1 Menahga, Minnesota
56464

GMA-9.

East of Australia in Latitude 30 degrees South, between 180 degrees East and 170 degrees West longitude. It is centered over the Kermadec Trench, north of New Zealand.

GMA-10.

30 degrees South latitude between 120 and 100 degrees West longitude. In the Challenger Deep. Its center is directly over Easter Island -- 2500 miles west of Chile.

And to make the cheese more binding, we have --

GMA-11.

Apparently centered over Catalina Island off the west coast of California, U.S.A. Extends eastward into Nevada and westward to the Hawaiians. No further information on it of a concrete nature, other than the San Andreas fault. Between CONUS and Hawaii the sea lanes and air routes are well travelled.



TELEGRAPHER EDISON

(Continued from Page 4)

The station master was doubly pleased, because he found Edison an apt, willing pupil, who obviously enjoyed learning to become a train telegrapher.

Under the guidance of the station master, Edison progressed rapidly, for it was plain to see that he had a talent for this work, and in a few months, though only 15 years old, Edison turned into a competent train telegrapher. He could send and receive Morse code, knew the railroad "code," and handle all company traffic.

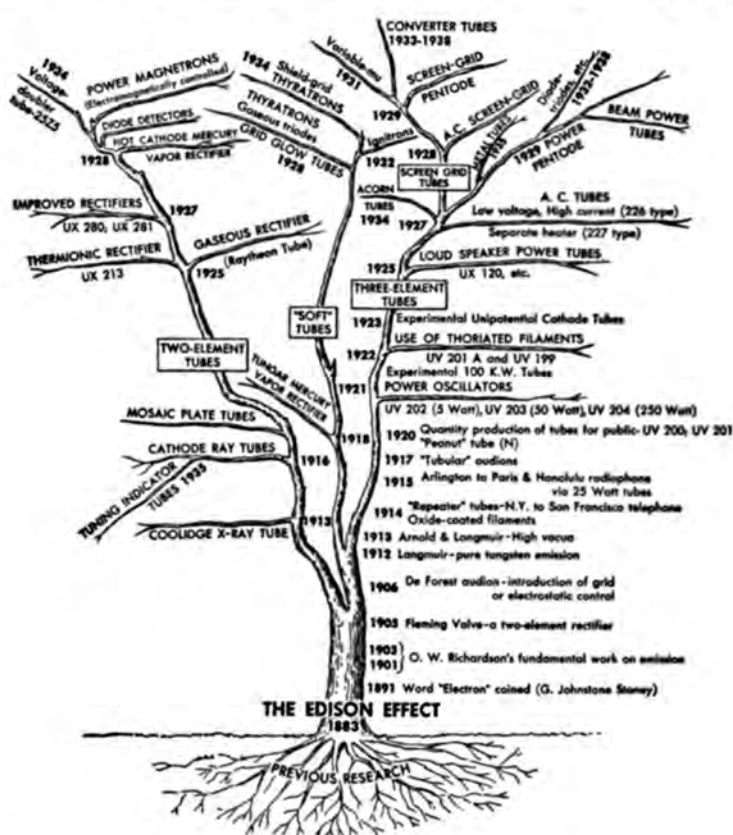
Mr. Mackenzie, well pleased at his friend and protegee, bestowed upon Edison the title of "plug" telegrapher, a status that would offer the youngster good employment almost anywhere for the Civil War was draining the pool of available telegraphers. Opportunities were all around. Edison, the spunky "plug," with little else going for him, landed his first job as a train telegrapher at Stratford Junction, Canada. To him, this was a learning phase, to get more experience, besides earning a good salary and living on his own.

In time, he would be able to copy up to 45 words per minute from the sounder -- the speed designated by the industry as being the "experts" speed. At this speed, he could earn a comfortable living as a professional telegrapher. Earning good money was important to Edison, because he needed additional funds for his chemicals and other equipment that he used for his experiments. Train telegraphy offered him an opportunity to job hop, to see the country, to meet people -- to grow.

Most train telegraphers in those days were an odd lot of Bohemian-like characters, satisfying their wanderlusts, going wherever the money was, a hard core of drinkers, some; just plain crazy, others....

"I remember one fellow," recalled Edison, "saying that he had only sixty cents to his name and was heading for San Francisco. When tomorrow came, the man was gone."

Witness to History



The Family Tree of the Thermionic Tubes. From the early work of Edison and previous research men, many types of vacuum or thermionic tubes have come. The words on this chart describing these new devices may sound like Greek to the uninitiated reader, but each new tube has proved to be of vast technical importance. Whole new systems of communication have been based upon them. There is no end in sight to the production of still further tools of this sort—provided the research laboratories keep going. Similarly, there is no end in sight to the new uses for the tubes already produced. (Courtesy Electronics)



THE WIRELESS PIONEER



Edison, too, blended right in with this Bohemian life, hopping from one job to another that was paying a little more, or to one offering him more time to pursue his outside experiments. It was an insane way to live, and he was enjoying every minute of it.

In railroad work, the traffic would often come in flurries, with long stretches of boredom in between. During these lulls, he would either conduct his experiments or catnap for forty. He even went so far as to hook up an automatic sender of the Morse number "six" -- the sign-in that he was to transmit at certain intervals. While the automatic "six" was being sent, he was busily engaged elsewhere.

As time passed, Edison developed into a top notch telegrapher, attaining the "experts" speed of 45 wpm. To attain this speed in Morse, Edison developed his own peculiar writing, or I should say, printing style. It could be described as a pleasant mixture of clean up-and-down printing, touched with a flourish of script. It was a style that infuriated some and astounded others. Edison had thoughtfully worked out this style so that he could attain maximum writing speed with a minimum of effort, yet maintaining a high level of legibility. He carried this style with him throughout his life and it is readily recognized even today as "Edison's."

Still in his teens, Edison sought a position with Western Union in Boston -- a city that offered him good opportunities to further his experiments while earning an excellent salary. He was experimenting at the time with a multiplex system for sending simultaneous messages over the same wire.

He showed up in Boston and presented to the manager a letter stating that he could copy Morse in this neat style of writing up to 45 words per minute. On the basis of this letter and a quick on-the-job trial, the manager hired Edison on the spot.

The other young men there would put this arrogant buck to the test fast enough. They snickered among themselves as they agreed to have Edison take the number one New York wire, the wire that sizzled with high-speed press copy for the Boston Herald. Only the best of the "experts" handled the number one line, and in New York, the sender was among the fastest Morse operators in the business.

The word was out. They circled Edison like wolves before the kill, keeping their distance, remaining silent, watching, waiting. With Edison ready, the New York operator started sending, slowly at first, and Edison proceeded to write the message down on the pad. Gradually the New York operator gained momentum, a little like a steam engine pulling out of the station. Others stopped working to gather around, too. Edison, who at first only suspected, now knew full well what was happening.

(Continued Next Page)



EDISON - 1895



THOMAS A. EDISON holding an experimental lamp used in the discovery of the "Edison Effect" in 1880. This was the basic fundamental principal on which all modern day electronics is based.

(Continued from Page 36)

Unperturbed, he continued writing in his unique style, while New York steadily increased in speed. Soon New York was running full tilt, as fast as anyone there had ever heard. The clacking of the sounder filled the hushed room as the battle to the death between New York and Boston continued. One of them had to break soon, as one minute dissolved into the next. They studied Edison and watched his pencil glide deftly across the paper.

Edison, thoroughly enjoying himself in this moment of glory among his peers, paused to give his pencil one quick turn in the sharpener at this side, and then continued writing. They stood aghast at what they were witnessing.

With an infectious broad smile on his face, Edison then interrupted the New York operator, as he was later to recall: "Say, young man -- change off and send with the other foot."

They welcomed him aboard with shouts of approval and laughter.

References

Matthew Josephson, *Edison, A Biography*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. New York (1959)

Arthur J. Palmer, *Edison, Inspiration to Youth*, Edison Birthplace Assoc., Inc., Milan, Ohio (1962)



October 21 1879

Life - 40 Hours

A few glimpses of Thomas A. Edison

*(On the occasion
of his birthday,
February 11, 1847)*

PROBABLY the story that tells the most about Thomas Edison is the one in which an assistant said to him one day, "We should give up. We have tried several thousand things that have failed."

Edison's response:
"Failed, no. We have learned several thousand things that do not work."

IT WAS October 19, 1879, when Edison and an assistant, Francis Jehl, turned on a lightbulb. It burned out 40 hours later.

No consumer today would put up with such shabby performance—but a century ago it was a triumph. It was the first practical incandescent light, and the reason that this year PG&E and the nation's electric industry celebrate the Centennial of Light.

THE MAN WHO would contribute the incandescent light and so many other inventions to the world had only a few months of formal education, but thanks to his mother he had a lifelong love for learning.

His thirst for knowledge sometimes had unexpected results.

As a youth he worked as a newsboy on a train, selling papers at each stop. Anxious to use every moment, he set up in an unused end of a baggage car a laboratory for experimentation.

Unhappily, an unsuccessful experiment set fire to the car and lab and job both went up in smoke.

EDISON went to New York as a young man and came up with a key invention, an improved stock-ticker system. The \$40,000 he received for it he used to buy a factory in New Jersey. This became the world-famous Menlo Park laboratory, where he assembled the team of associates that helped him develop the incandescent light.

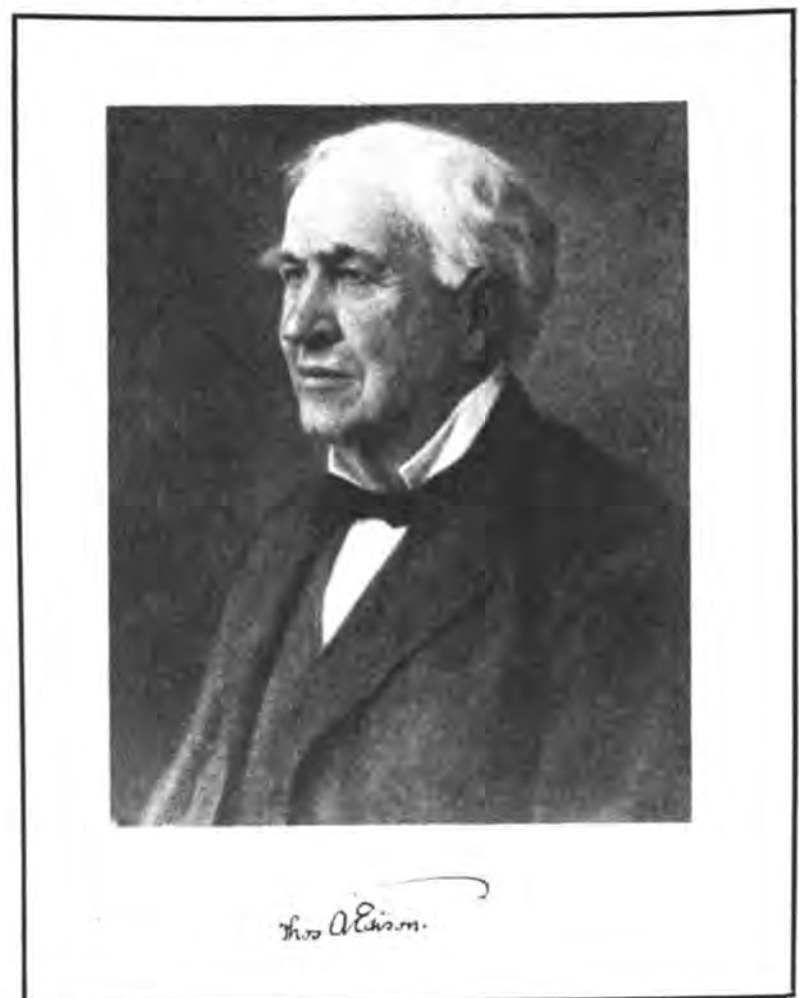
BEFORE the light, though, came other inventions including a way to send several messages simultaneously over one telegraph line and the world's first successful phonograph. With continuing improvements, the phonograph (which some have called his most truly original invention) became his financial mainstay. Later he invented the motion picture camera.

HE WAS NOT the first to try developing an electric light bulb. Such bulbs existed, but burned out so fast as to be worthless. It was Edison's patient experimentation and development that brought light into the homes of America and the world.

After that first real success in October 1879, further experiments produced a bulb that lasted a remarkable 102 hours. At this point Edison obtained patents and secured financial backing for development of the light and the facilities to make it useful, such as generators and power stations.

From such beginnings grew the systems and the wide use of electricity we know today.

THOMAS ALVA EDISON died in 1931, having lived 84 years. In those years he helped alter for the better the lifestyle of the world.



Thanks to member--W. Otis Fitchett [SGP-390] of Holly Hill, Florida for furnishing much memorabilia about Thomas A. Edison for whom our CHAPTER VII was named. We also thank PG&E for material furnished.



Spark's



SALT WATER BOOKSHELF



HONORING AMERICA'S PREEMINENT AUTHOR-PUBLISHER OF NAUTICAL HISTORY

Frank O. Braynard

USS Leviathan:
A Whale of a Ship

By Frank O. Braynard

Can a ship at one and the same time have more than one official gross tonnage? Such was the case with the USS *Leviathan* (SP-1326), the Navy's largest troopship in World War I. She made 38 transatlantic crossings during the war period, including nine in which she brought U. S. soldiers home following the armistice. The *Leviathan* took one of every ten combat troops of the American Expeditionary Force across, several times carrying more than 14,000 persons on a single trip. She became a national institution—lovingly known as "The Big Train" and "Levi-Nathan."

The huge ship began her life in 1914 as the SS *Vaterland* (fatherland), a German liner. At the time, she was the largest ship in the world. The liner was seized by the U. S. government at Hoboken, New Jersey on 6 April 1917, the day the United States entered the war. Renamed the *Leviathan*, she was rebuilt by the Navy for troopship service. Her wartime experiences were filled with gallantry, escapes from U-boats, and a number of great achievements.

On 29 October 1919, the day she was decommissioned by the Navy, the *Leviathan* was turned over to the U. S. Shipping Board, a government agency set up to manage seized German ships. At that point the nation's foremost naval architect, William Francis Gibbs (known as "Mr. Navy" in World War II), took charge and rebuilt her to serve once again as a passenger liner. He was aware that her German sistership was slightly longer and would soon come out as the British liner *Majestic*. She had been launched just before the war as the SS *Bismarck* and was seized as part of German war reparations. She would have a gross tonnage of 56,000, whereas the

Leviathan's was only 54,000 (a gross ton is 100 cubic feet of permanently enclosed earning space—with many complicated exceptions). Gibbs, who wanted the *Leviathan* to have the title "world's largest ship," knew the tonnage system well and was aware that an admasurer at one custom house might not agree with another because of differing techniques of measurement. He knew all the tricks and used them to give the *Leviathan* a larger gross than she had originally. She came out of Newport News shipyard measuring 59,956.65 tons. It was merely a paper change, although there had been many structural alterations during the reconditioning. The British could have done the same, but it was beneath their dignity. Thus both claimed for their vessels the title of "world's largest ship." In 1923, the *Leviathan* was sold to the United States Lines. With the onset of the depression, the new owners realized they could use the American tonnage measurement system and pay less in port

dues. As a result, the *Leviathan* "shrank" to 49,800 gross tons, much to the dismay of her followers.

The U. S. measurement is based on an 1865 law which has never changed since. It says gross tonnage shall include only those areas encompassed by the ship's hull and the deck attached directly to the hull. This was all there was when the law was enacted. But with the passing of sails and the rising of a ship's superstructure, ships came to have more tonnage if all new areas were included. The British, Germans, and others changed their rules, but the United States didn't. So under foreign rules a passenger ship is about 20% larger. One great liner put a bed in a cargo hold going through the Panama Canal and made a few other such temporary changes to cut her gross enough to save thousands of dollars of canal tolls. There are tonnage specialists who do nothing but devise ways to reduce a ship's tonnage so she has lower port charges or Suez or Panama canal tolls. But the contrast between U. S. measurement and foreign has been a most striking and yet little understood fact for many years. The SS *America*, built at Newport News in 1939 and famous as the World War II Navy troopship *West Point* (AP-23) was 26,314 gross tons under the U. S. flag but, using British measurement, she became 33,532 as a Greek liner under the Chandris house-flag. The *Leviathan* was scrapped in Scotland in 1938-39—just too late to be our largest World War II troopship



The Story of the LEVIATHAN

By FRANK O. BRAYNARD

We are happy to welcome Frank Osborn Braynard into the Society as an Honorary Member [H-18]. His accomplishments are legion and world renown. Not only has he authored the wonderful series of "Leviathan" books which are an outstanding achievement in the preservation of Nautical History but a beautiful professional set that attracts attention where ever placed. The title of his latest book is "The Big Ship" which is the story of the SS United States - one of the greatest liners ever built in America. It tells of her conception and final construction in 1952, her record crossing of the Atlantic, the life-style aboard a great liner as she plies the North Atlantic, and other oceans. It also furnishes an intriguing account of the role played by William Francis Gibbs - the man who made the SS United States a reality. The book can be purchased from the Mariners Museum, Newport News, VA 23606. The cost is \$25.00 plus UPS shipping charge of \$1.75. Members or ship buffs interested in the Leviathan series might write Mr. Braynard at 98 DuBois, Sea Cliff, NY 11579. We think he would autograph copies for SOWP members.

Added to the laureate of authorship is that of a professional artist and in addition in the P/R field, he organized OPSAIL in 1976 - the major event of the American bicentennial celebration. He is past president of the Steamship Historical Society of America, founder of the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City and membership in many organizations too numerous to mention.



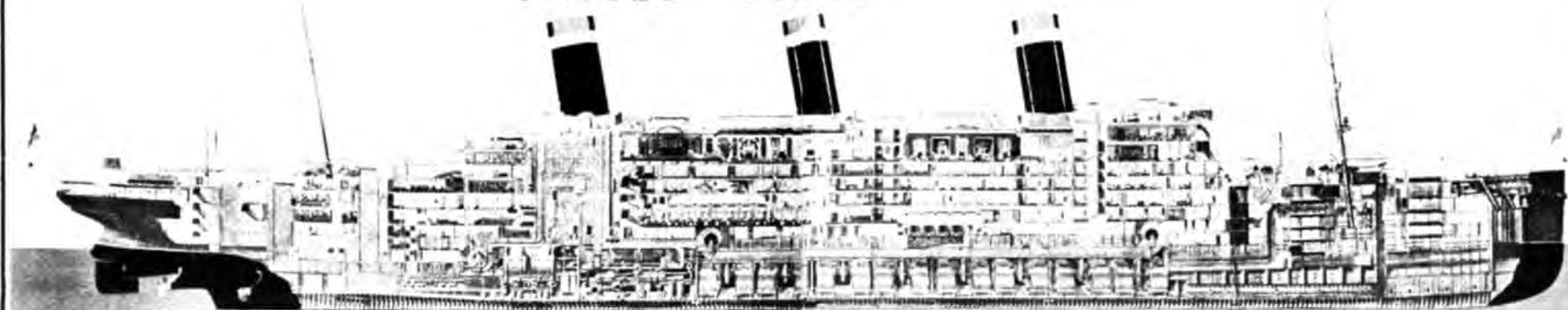
Returning to the United States in April 1919, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, center, poses on the *Leviathan's* bridge with Captain W. W. Phelps, the ship's commanding officer, and three

rear admirals who were bureau chiefs: left to right, David W. Taylor, Construction and Repair; Ralph Earle, Ordnance; Robert S. Griffin, Engineering.

LENGTH OVER ALL 950 FT 7 IN
HEIGHT FROM KEEL TO TOP OF STACK 184 FT
GROSS TONNAGE 59,956 65

S · S · L E V I A T H A N
World's Largest Ship
UNITED STATES LINES

NORMAL SEA SPEED 24.5 KNOTS
PASSENGER CAPACITY 3,061
WEIGHT LOADED 144,000,000 LBS



SOWP AUTHORS

Our members have been quite prolific the past few months in authoring new books. Among those received for review are the following: Herbert W. Cook 3707-V (Poetry, Shemya Island); Edwin L. Spight - 3677-V (Eagles of the Pacific); Theodore C. Mason 4017-V (Battleship Sailor); John E. Sandison - 1603-V ("Hi, I'm Johnny Sandison"). They are all very readable and interesting. Congratulations to all. May acceptance be rewarding to all. W.A.B.

EAGLES of the PACIFIC Consairways...

Memoirs of an Air Transport service during World War II

EAGLES OF THE PACIFIC

Edwin L. and Jeanne L. Spight - Authors.
Historical Aviation Album - Publishers - \$12.95 + \$1.00 Postage (*)
(Order from Authors: 8542 Florence Ave. Suite A. Downey, CA.90240
(*) Plus 6% tax in California.

This is the memoirs of service in the Air Transport of Consairways during World War II as written by member Edwin Spight [3677-V].

During WW-2, Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft Corp. of San Diego, CA., formed a separate company, a transport division called Consairways. A government contract was awarded the firm to assist the military Air Transport Command in flying high priority personnel and material to far distant theaters of war in the Pacific.

The author was a radioman with Consairways throughout the war and not only relates first hand experiences of those dangerous and uncertain flying years but also has collected the reminiscences of many of his fellow crewmen. This is not a historical narrative but rather a very personal, human glimpse into a colorful group of aviation pioneers.

Consairways is little known because of the veil of secrecy with which they operated during the war. At first their job was to flight deliver aircraft to Allied nations in the Far East. Later, as the airline became better established they flew every type of cargo imaginable from toilet paper to torpedoes and passengers from privates to Prime Ministers. These men and their reconditioned machines flew in some of the worst weather conditions the Pacific hurricanes could produce, before the days when aircraft were capable of flying over such destructive forces. They flew with primitive communications, questionable navigational aids and limited propeller power, hoping the old bucket of bolts would hold together. And yet the crews considered all of this 'routine'.

The author dramatizes the seriousness of this business while flavoring many of the events in a humorous fashion a necessity that kept sanity within the ranks. These were pioneers in Pacific ocean flying. They made the unusual and impossible - practical. Their experiences are now legendary. They were professional in every sense of the word.

(Reprinted from 'dust cover' which is confirmed by Ye Ed.)



Consairway LB-30, No. AL 532 prepares to take off from the steel matting on Guadalcanal's runway.

SHEMYA ISLAND

THE COOK BOOK OF POETRY

Herbert N. Cook-Author (SOWP Member 3207-V)
Dorrance & Co., Publisher, 828 Lancaster Ave. Bryn Mawr, PA
19010. Price \$4.95

The Cook Book of Poetry is a collection of poems written during our members stay on Shemya Island, [Black Pearl of the Aleutians] an outpost of America's Arctic defense line, to his wife Miriam who remained in Philadelphia during his lonely assignment far from home.

The 50 plus pages of poems in this hard cover book will hit a responsive chord in many of us old time wireless men who have been away from families on extended trips and who have felt the same tinge of loneliness expressed in the beautiful words of Brother Cook's enjoyable volume. We think you will enjoy it. WABreniman.



Book Reviews

SALTWATER BOOKSHELF



THEODORE C. MASON

Battleship Sailor

Theodore C. Mason - Author (SOWP 4017-V)
Naval Institute Press, Publisher. Annapolis, MD 21402
Theodore Mason's Battleship Sailor is a delightful memoir, meticulously recalled. Anyone who ever hear the shriek of the bosun's pipe will hear the echoes in these pages and will recall his own loss of innocence in Navy Blue. "Ted" enlisted in the Naval Communication reserve in 1939 and volunteered for active duty in Aug. 1940. Shortly after boot camp and radio school in San Diego he was assigned to the USS California. After his ship was sunk in the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was transferred to the battleship Pennsylvania for a short stint, and then to the fleet tug Pawnee. He was radioman on the Pawnee from 1942 to 1945 and participated in the occupation of the Solomon Island and the Philippine invasion.

Ted Mason's portrait of the life of an enlisted man in a navy Battlewagon" is vivid, accurate, and intensely readable. His account of the "Zero's" strike the morning of December 7th is worth the price of the book. "Ted" on deck of the California give a blow by blow that is unforgettable and his observations on the 'caste' system of the service is factual account of 'telling it like it was' that anyone who has served a hitch or two can not help but enjoy. W.A.B.

Hi!
I'm Johnny Sandison
by Johnny Sandison



Johnny Sandison.

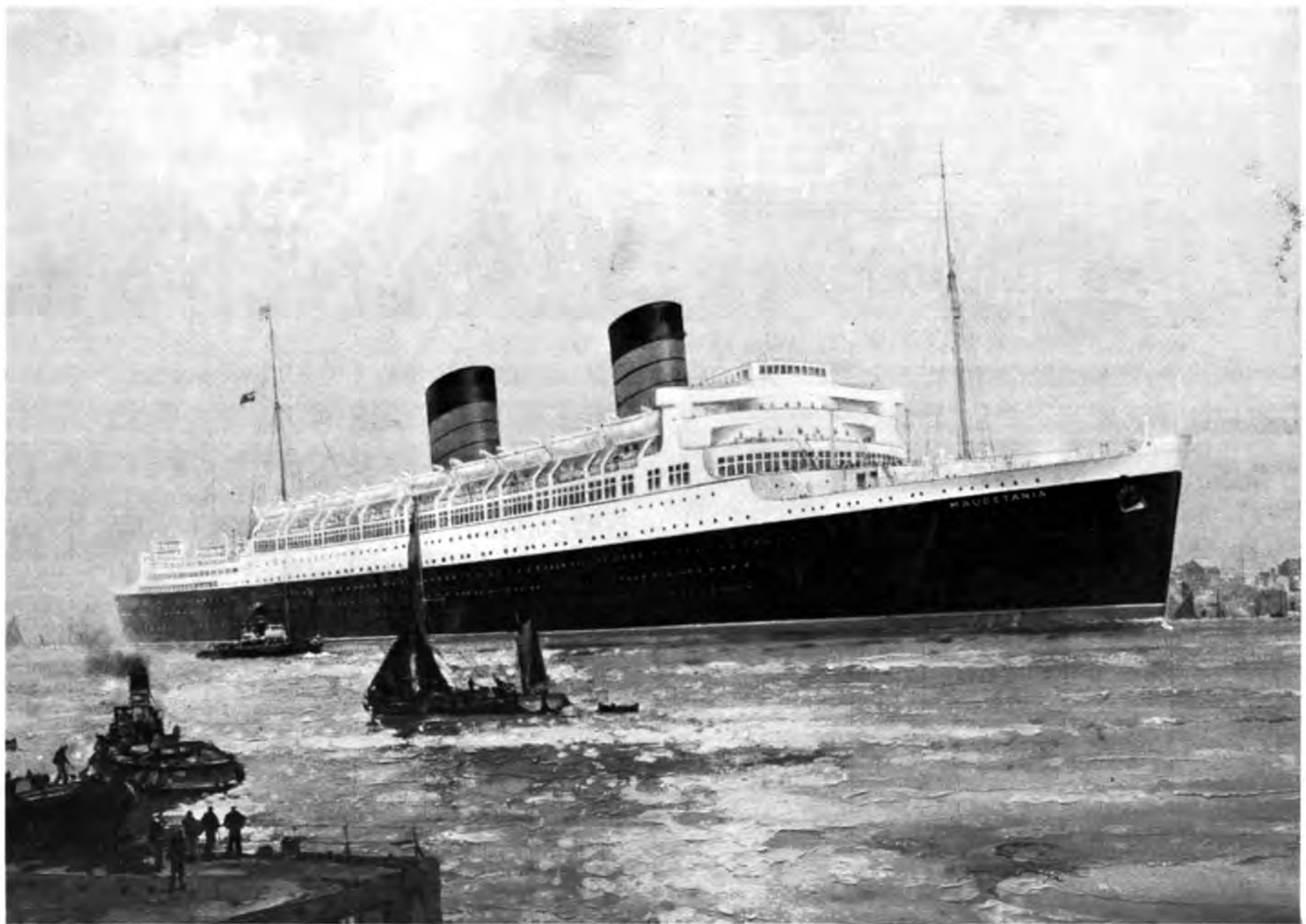
Communications Officer

H.M.C.S. Queen

One could say that Johnny Sandison was the "Johnny Carson of Canada" (or vice-versa). They are both highly visible TV personalities known to millions in North America. Both have been on the air over TV for many years. The difference in the time they 'work their shift' is perhaps the greatest anti-

thesis of their 'act'. Sandison works the prairies of Western Canada as "Good Morning Mayor" (6AM) while Carson hits the tube on the "Tonight" show at 11:30PM. The Breniman rating gives Carson the edge because we can't tune in Regina, Saskatchewan in the morning while airline to S.F. is less than 50 miles with no reception difficulties. This leads up to a very readable book Sandison has authored and just published by Brigdens of Regina. It is available from: "Hi! I'm Johnny Sandison, Box 4433, Regina, Sask. Canada S4P 3W7. The tab is \$16.95 plus \$2.00 shipping. Johnny is Society member 1603-V FS 1943 RCNW/T Station CFH. He has ham call VE5AAS.

ONE OF WORLDS GREAT SHIPS



S.S. MAURETANIA (II) - GTTM

"Beauty rests in the eye of the beholder" -- so an old saying goes. Few ships in the world surpass the classic beauty of the SS. MAURETANIA [II] -- in the opinion of "Ye Ed", except perhaps the Cunard cruise-ship Caronia. There are many ships which surpass Mauretania (II) in speed. Her namesake however held the "Bleu Riband" for 22 years and held a wonderful record for consistent performance across the Western Ocean. Example: During one year on the consecutive crossings she arrive in port with difference of only one minute which was hard to believe. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had a 'love affair going with M-I. He was fascinated with the graceful, yacht-like lines and her appearance of power and class. During her later years she was given a white coat of paint for cruising and became known as the "White Queen"

The picture furnished is from the collection of our late member, David L. Brown [647-SGP]. Dave became a 'silent key' Apr. 10 1972. Both Dave and wife were "Big Ship Buffs" and travelled the world. He is remembered as one of the Society's early benefactors and furnished us with a wealth of memorabilia, especially ships, lighthouses and marine sketches.

MAURETANIA (II) above was launched in 1939 and served until 1965. She was of 35,738 tons with measurements 771 x 89. Twin screw, turbines, 22-Knots. Built by Cammell, Laird & Co., Birkenhead, M.V. Liverpool - N.Y. June 1939. Laid up in NY Dec. 1939 and converted to troopship at Sydney 1940. She resumed passenger service April 26 1947. Broken up for scrap 1965.

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~ Dedicated to the History of Seagoing Wireless Operators ~

Special thanks to the following for these documents:
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V = Veteran, M = Member, Sparks = Worked at Sea]

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